11/24/95 STR 1147   The Original Independent OnLine Magazine!

 - CPU Industry Report   - Kid's Computing   - Gates Comdex Keynote
 - Symantec/Delrina OK'ed - Apple/Sagan Settle - PC XMAS Expected
 - StoneKeep! FAQ   - Mac Updates   - Comdex Report
 - Laptop Forum Opens   - People Talking   - GEnie FOR SALE

                   IBM Announces 1,200 Job Cuts
                 WordPerfect's Bastian Quits Novell
                  3M Unveils Major Restructuring

Florida Lotto
_   LottoMan v1.35 Results: 11/17/95:   3 matches in 2 plays

From the Editor's Desk...
     The day after Turkey day. Sorry Tom. to see you go but please take
this thought with you. You did your job well but its all over now. No
matter how you look at it, Thanksgiving is a great holiday. The beginning of
the Holiday Season and the Christmas Sales Season. Actually, today is the
official beginning of the Holiday Sales Season.
     Many companies are banking on the Sales of this holiday season to carry
them forward into 1996 comfortably. Others, are trying to slide through the
Holiday Sales Season, grabbing what they can and "hoping for the best". The
majority of those will be either gone or completely re-organized by this
time next year. Some CEO's and their immediate assistants are hard headed
about the financial power the Christmas Sales Season is capable of yielding
year after year. You can spot these "enlightened executive quiz kids"
results and final effect by the obvious lack of their company's products in
the nation's major sales outlets ready to snapped up by the holiday
shoppers.
     Don't tell anybody but Sony Corp. has a potential "slam-dunk" product
out and on the market in force this season. Its called a Playstation. This
is the Game Console to watch. Its reception by the purchasing public has
been phenomenal. Some are buying more than one or two. Sony has ensured
product availability for the Playstation, its games, peripherals and add-on
gadgets. If you own Sony stock expect to be pleased by its growth.
                                        Ralph..

Ps; for those who feel Press Releases about LAY-OFFS are not necessary,
check out the Headlines and their coverage.

Of Special Note:
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STReport is now ready to offer much more in the way of serving the Networks,
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We now have our very own WEB/NewsGroup/FTP Site and although its in its
early stages of construction, do stop by and have a look see. Since We've

received numerous requests to receive STReport from a wide variety of Internet addressees, we were compelled to put together an Internet distribution/mailing list for those who wished to receive STReport on a regular basis, the file is ZIPPED, then UUENCODED. Unfortunately, we've also received a number of opinions that the UUENCODING was a real pain to deal with. So, as of October 01,1995, you'll be able to download STReport directly from our very own SERVER & WEB Site. While there, be sure to join our STR list. In any case, our current Internet mailing list will continue to be used for at least the next eight weeks. Each of our readers will have by then, received their information packet about how they may upgrade their personal STR News Services.

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DEDICATED TO SERVING YOU!

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```
        Internet                    rmariano@streport.com
        Internet                    CZGJ44A@prodigy.com
        Internet                    RMARIANO@delphi.com
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                         STReport Headline News

                    LATE BREAKING INDUSTRY-WIDE NEWS

                    Weekly Happenings in the Computer World

                       Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

                       IBM Announces 1,200 Job Cuts
     As part of a broader cost-cutting action it announced last month, IBM
today notified some 1,200 employees that they will no longer have a job with
the company. The Associated Press says this is the first cut since IBM last
year completed a monstrous downsizing that took its work force from 302,000
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at the start of 1993 to 220,000 at the end of last year.

"While the newest job cuts aren't nearly so big," says the wire service, "they affect most parts of the company, including several software product groups and all hardware groups except personal computers. Lotus Development Corp., which IBM acquired this summer, was not affected." The cutback is part of the plan that also includes taking a charge of about $800 million in the fourth quarter for restructuring. The money will pay for severance, real estate and other short-term expenses.

AP says in the latest cut about 200 people in Raleigh-Durham, North Carolina, are involved; in both Austin, Texas, and San Jose, California, between 100 and 200; in Rochester, Minnesota, about 100; and Poughkeepsie, New York, 60. Jobs were also cut at IBM's huge office complex in Somers, New York, home of several divisional headquarters. A smaller number of workers were laid off at other IBM offices.

Also IBM spokesman Tom Beerman told the wire service his employer will move about 40 employees who work at a distribution center in Dayton, New Jersey, to Boulder, Colorado. "Other attrition and retirements, hiring in some growing divisions and the addition of Lotus' 5,000 employees will result in IBM's overall employment at the end of the year being roughly the same as at the end of 1994," AP adds.

## Symantec-Delrina Merger Approved

At separate annual meetings, the shareholders of Delrina Corp. and Symantec Corp. have voted in favor of the proposed merger between the two software publishers. The merger was announced on July 6, with the goal of combining resources to take advantage of the rapidly growing communications and networking software markets.

Upon consummation of the stock swap transaction, expected on or about Nov. 22, Delrina will become a Symantec subsidiary. All Symantec directors and officers will remain in their current positions following the transaction. Two Delrina executives, Chairman and CEO Dennis Bennie and President Mark Skapinker, will join the Symantec's board. Bennie will also become an executive officer of Symantec. Delrina's product development and several other operations will remain based in Toronto.

Delrina produces a variety of products in the fax, data and voice communications, electronic forms and consumer software markets. Symantec offers a wide range of systems and application software products.

## WordPerfect's Bastian Quits Novell

Novell Inc. reports that WordPerfect Corp. co-founder Bruce Bastian has resigned from its board of directors. Bastian joined the Novell board as a result of the company's 1994 acquisition of WordPerfect Corp., which he founded with Alan Ashton in 1979. Bastian's departure comes a couple of weeks after Novell announced that it plans to sell most of the assets and products from the WordPerfect buyout. Novell says Bastian is leaving to pursue other interests. "We wish Bruce well in his future ventures," says Robert J. Frankenberg, Novell's chairman and CEO.

## NexGen Unveils Faster CPUs

NexGen Inc. has announced the first microprocessors in a planned series of higher-performing Nx586 CPUs. The Nx586 line features fifth-generation microprocessors that compete against Intel Corp.'s Pentium chips. The Nx586-P133 and Nx586-P120 microprocessors are clocked at speeds of 133MHz and 120MHz, respectively. NexGen claims that the devices perform up to 50 percent faster than Intel's 133MHz and 120MHz Pentiums while providing computer makers with a better value. Both microprocessors are sampling now, with production quantities expected to ship in December. The Nx586-P133 microprocessor is priced at $447 in 1000-unit quantities, while the Nx586-P120 processor is priced at $303 in volume quantities.

## I-Net Standards Identified

The Information Infrastructure Standards Panel (IISP), representing more than 80 standards developing organizations, corporations, industry associations, consortia, and government agencies, has identified close to 40

standards needed to implement the information superhighway.

At a two-day meeting in Milwaukee, the IISP addressed such standards issues as security, copyright protection, and network interconnection. The IISP, established in 1994, is a cross-industry standards effort sponsored by the American National Standard Institute (ANSI). The IISP aims to ensure that the standards needed to deliver products and services across the national and international information infrastructures are identified and developed.

"The group comprises a broad spectrum of participants from the private and public sectors and from all industries, with more than 25 standards organizations working to determine where existing standards meet requirements and where additional standards development efforts are required," says Oliver Smoot, the IISP's chairman. More information about the IISP is available on the group's World Wide Web page: http://www.ansi.org/iisp/iisphome.html.

## IBM Plans 'Internet Station'

IBM Corp. CEO Louis V. Gerstner Jr. says his company is working on an "Internet station" that would give users Internet access and computing capabilities for only a few hundred dollars. In his COMDEX/Fall keynote speech, Gerstner remarked that the machine wouldn't have as much storage capability as a regular PC, but would offer a fast communications connection so that programs and information could be downloaded as needed from the Internet and other online services.

IBM expects to ship the machine early next year, said Gerstner. While the IBM chief didn't offer any specific details or pricing information, industry analysts are predicting that Internet stations will sell in the $500 to $800 range, far below the $1,500 to $2,000 needed to purchase a complete multimedia PC system. Gerstner noted that IBM's machine will be designed to supplement, not replace, PCs.

## 3M Unveils Major Restructuring

3M Corp. says it intends to launch its data storage and imaging systems businesses into an independent, publicly owned company. As a part of the planned change, 3M will also discontinue its audio and video tape business in about a year. 3M expects to record pre-tax charges of over $600 million against fourth-quarter earnings. The investment banking firm, Morgan Stanley & Co. and the law firm of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom, are serving as advisers to 3M. 3M expects to eliminate approximately 5,000 jobs--most within the next 12 months. Of the 5,000 positions to be cut, about 3,000 will be in the U.S. While most of the workforce reduction will be accomplished through early retirement and other voluntary measures, up to 1,500 people will be asked to leave involuntarily. "While this is a decision we are not happy to make, it is the right thing to do," says Chairman and CEO L.D. DeSimone.

## CompuServe Sets Wireless Venture

A joint development effort between CompuServe Inc. and Socket Communications Inc. aims to make receiving wireless e-mail on a mobile computer as easy as plugging in a PC Card.

Beginning in late 1995, CompuServe plans to support Socket's PDF and MMF protocols to format e-mail forwarded to Socket Communications' PC Card alphanumeric pagers. The protocols are designed to offer a concise way of preserving the structure of e-mail messages sent across paging carrier networks, allowing long e-mail messages to be split into smaller packets that can be recombined and displayed on mobile computers.

By the end of the year, CompuServe members will be able to use a pager to receive notification when electronic mail is delivered into their CompuServe mailbox. CompuServe members and users of other online and Internet services will also be able to send alphanumeric messages and numeric codes to CompuServe members' pagers.

By early 1996, additional services will allow members to filter messages and forward them to their pagers or other destinations. Members

will be able to use their pagers to receive select, personalized information such as stock quotes, sports scores, news, weather and other content from CompuServe.

"CompuServe has positioned itself to become the virtual communications center for mobile professionals," says Steve Owens, CompuServe's strategic account manager. "We'll be forwarding voice mail to notebooks and integrating e-mail with faxing and paging."

## Modem Offers One-Line Voice/Data

Hayes Microcomputer Products Inc. has introduced the Accura 288 V.34 DSVD Message Modem, a PC peripheral that allows simultaneous voice and data communications over a single phone line. The modem supports 28.8K bps data transmissions and 14.4K bps fax. The external version comes with a built-in microphone and speakers; the internal model comes with a microphone and integrates into its host PC's existing speaker system.

"Now small offices have a complete data, fax and voice messaging system available to them via a single telephone line," says Dennis Hayes, Hayes' chairman and CEO. "Everyone from power users conducting video conferencing or real-time document sharing to consumers interested in interactive gaming will see the benefits of this product's versatility and speed." The device is scheduled to ship in early 1996 for $339 (internal version) and $359 (external version).

## Study Focuses on Net Security

A new study finds one out of every five corporations connected to the Internet reported an attempted or a successful break-in to their company in the past year. It also finds two-thirds of the companies surveyed encountered a computer virus in the past year, though only a small portion of the viruses caused financial loss. Studying 1,300 organizations, Ernst & Young also determined that while security of information on the Internet has improved, concern about security is on the rise, as business use of the world's largest computer network increases.

Reporting on the study, the Reuter News Service says 54 percent of the respondents who suffered a security loss over the last two years through their Net links were unable or unwilling to estimate the dollar value of their losses. Meanwhile, only 12 percent reported a quantifiable financial loss and the most frequently noted was less than $250,000. Twenty respondents said losses were in excess of $1 million. Inadvertent errors were the biggest source of losses.

E&Y analyst Dan White says the "hype" over the Net "presents tough challenges for those responsible for security. Of those Internet-connected, our survey population showed a continuing large level of dissatisfaction and uncertainty with the overall level of security with their connection to the Internet."

Also the study found 66 percent of the respondents who are not using the Internet now and 83 percent of respondents who plan to within the next year said they would use the Internet for more business purposes if security were enhanced.

White told Reuters he does not believe that the Internet will be used for major business or financial transactions, adding that private corporate networks will proliferate. And he does not think encryption technology is a viable means of security for the computer network, adding, "Encryption has never really caught on because it's difficult to use and administer. It's just something that has never caught on as a technology."!

## Exec Foresees Network Computers

Network computers -- selling for as little as $500 and facilitating easy access to the Internet -- will be available in quantity by next summer, built by various North American and Asian manufacturers. That's prediction from Oracle Corp. chairman Larry Ellison, speaking at a panel discussion at the Comdex trade show in Las Vegas yesterday. Giving his most detailed explanation yet of the computer he envisions as a way to cheaply and easily tap the power of the Internet and other computer networks, Ellison said

Oracle is working on an operating system that will be licensed for about $15 per computer and provide an alternative to Microsoft Corp.'s software with its wholesale cost of $35 per unit.

According to the Reuter News Service, Ellison also said the computer will include a keyboard and mouse, monitor, a 4MB DRAM memory chip, 4MB of flash memory, a 220MHz microprocessor and a network connection card. "While Ellison said the devices could be built for $500," Reuters observed, "he did not specify the retail price or explain how they would be distributed. He said Oracle is building a prototype of the device and will demonstrate it publicly in February."

The new computer will not have a capacity to store information on a hard disk or floppy diskette. Rather, most of the operating system and any applications will be stored on a centralized network, said Ellison, adding, "I don't think I need something as complicated and expensive as PCs. Give me a fast network computer and make somebody else responsible for my hard disk."

He said that under the network computer model, which he said was more of a service than a product, Ellison said operating systems, applications and information will be updated automatically as they are available. In a comment greeted by applause from the Comdex audience of about 1,000 people, Ellison said, "The reason PCs are so unpleasant to deal with is that you must constantly reconfigure the hardware and software to make it do what you want."

The Oracle chief said the network computer will appeal to any customers currently using personal computers in either the business or consumer market, adding that PCs are "unbelievably expensive and hard to maintain." He cited a figure that companies pay an average of $8,000 a year in hardware, software and maintenance for every employee with a PC. He also said the network computer will be "dramatically easier to use" and have capabilities beyond what today's PCs have, such as the capability to handle multiple streams of video data, noting, "This is not a dumb appliance."

## Poulsen Pleads Guilty to Cracking

Federal prosecutors have dropped espionage charges against Kevin Poulsen after the famed computerist pleaded guilty in San Jose, California, this week to lesser criminal charges. Writer Sandra Ann Harris of United Press International says computer rights groups breathed a sigh of relief when spy charges were dismissed because they "feared the federal government had filed the charges with the hope they would have a chilling effect on the hacker community and set a dangerous precedent in the burgeoning but immature field of computer law."

Poulsen was the first American computer intruder to be charged under U.S. espionage laws. Law Professor Robert Berring of Boalt Hall at the University of California, Berkeley, told the wire service, "The traditional category of espionage, that's a very serious crime in the Constitution; you can spend the rest of your life in jail for that. That's not what this guy was doing."

He added computer law "is still in the womb" in terms of its development and the Poulsen case shows that federal authorities are still groping with how to handle high-tech crimes. Harris says the Poulsen case should serve as "a wake-up call to federal authorities that an open debate is needed to prod the development of computer law so it can keep pace with the fast-growing, high-tech industry."

Of authorities' original intention to try Poulsen for espionage, Berring said, "It would have set a very dangerous precedent." As reported earlier, the spy charge was filed in 1992 when authorities found the secret document (containing a list of overseas military targets) on a computer tape among Poulsen's belongings. However, an investigation revealed Poulsen had retrieved the document as part of his authorized work for the Menlo Park firm SRI. The U.S. military reportedly had given the file to him as part of Poulsen's job writing computer programs to test military programs.

Prosecutors backed down Thursday, saying they decided to drop the charges because the information in the military document is out of date and because the case had dragged on for six years. Then the 30-year-old Poulsen, who has been in and out of court on computer criminal charges since his teenage years, pleaded guilty to a string of charges stemming from intrusions into phone company files.

Poulsen told the court he was guilty of burglarizing phone company offices, obtaining manuals and access codes and using this proprietary information to obtain free telephone service and phony credit cards.

Judge Ronald M. Whyte said he will sentence Poulsen in January. Poulsen has been jailed since 1991 when authorities caught up to him living in hiding in Los Angeles where he rigged radio station phone lines to win call-in prize contests, scams that netted him two Porsches, $20,000 in cash, and two trips to Hawaii. He was convicted of the radio-rigging charges and sentenced to four years. UPI says the addition of the phone charges sentence will add several months to Poulsen's sentence, probably resulting in his release next May.

## Apple Settles Sagan Suit

Apple Computer Inc. says it has settled a lawsuit brought against it by astronomer Carl Sagan. Sagan had objected to Apple's use of the internal code- name "Carl Sagan" during the development of Apple's Power Macintosh 7100 computer without his permission, and had also objected to references to the code-name and to his dispute with Apple in the computer and national press.

Apple contended that its use of the internal code-name was not commercial and did not constitute an endorsement requiring Sagan's permission. The settlement's terms weren't disclosed. After Sagan raised his objection to the computer's designation, Apple staffers re-code-named the Mac 7100 to "BHA"--reportedly an abbreviation for "butt-head astronomer."

"Dr. Sagan has made great contributions in many areas of higher learning and in particular has made complex subject matter interesting and understandable to a wide audience," says Paul D. Carmichael, Apple's director of patents and trademarks. "Apple has always had great respect for Dr. Sagan, and it was never Apple's intention to cause Dr. Sagan or his family any embarrassment or concern."

## Student Accused of Net Terrorism

A 19-year-old New York college student has been arrested on charges he terrorized an Indianapolis family via the Internet, threatening in e-mail messages to hunt them down and kill them and rape a 12-year-old girl. Arrested Tuesday at his home in Massapequa Park, New York, the St. John's University student was charged with aggravated harassment, a misdemeanor. "It was a prank to him," police detective Bill Bambrick told Associated Press writer Pat Milton. "He was surprised we traced him."

Meanwhile, Barrie Winnette, fiance of the mother in the family, told the wire service, "We were pretty shaken. We didn't know what this person was capable of carrying out." But defense attorney James Paar denied his client was involved, saying someone else wrote the messages. Says AP, "A person using the log-on 'Mr. Bungle' broke into a conversation that the 12-year-old was having Oct. 21 on the Internet with a 13-year-boy from Toronto, Bambrick said. Mr. Bungle got Amanda's log-on, 'Baby Bubba,' from an online list. After a few innocuous questions about age, (the suspect) allegedly wrote that he wanted to sodomize her, police said."

Winnette told Milton, "Amber let out a gasp, and called her mom," He then sent a message saying: "I'm Baby Bubba's father," even though he's not. Mr. Bungle responded with sexually offensive messages which escalated into threats, AP reports. He wrote that he had HIV and would infect Amber. One message read, "Here I come for the rape. Let me inform you of my career. I hunt down little kids and stalk them."

Winnette replied, "You are a poor excuse for a human being, and I'm

logging this whole conversation for the authorities." AP says the conversation ended abruptly when Amber's mother became frightened and turned off the computer. When they logged back on several hours later, there were numerous threatening e-mail messages from Mr. Bungle. Indianapolis police, notified by the family, contacted the FBI, which notified Nassau County, New York, police. A Long Island Internet provider helped trace the messages. Detective Bambrick told the wire service that despite the graphic nature of the messages, "This kid just went overboard. He was very apologetic."

## Gallery Launches Computer System

Washington's National Gallery of Art today opens its interactive Micro Gallery, enabling museum visitors to view any of more than 1,700 paintings and sculptures with the touch of a finger. "The system will allow visitors to call up almost all the works in the gallery's collection by the name or country of the artist, the subject or type of the work and the time it was done," according to the Reuter News Service. "Selected works of art include information on their composition, symbolism, technique and cultural context." Gallery Director Earl Powell told the wire service, "Through digital color images, text, animation, special graphics and sound, we hope to reveal the expressive elements and artistic techniques that have made art central to the human experience."

The system is modeled in part on one in the National Gallery in London, which opened in 1991. Both were funded by grants from the American Express Foundation. Reuters says the system includes an illustrated dictionary of art terms, biographical information on artists, a timeline of major cultural and historic events in relation to the art works, and information about the National Gallery. Visitors can use the computer to design their own tour of the gallery by printing a map showing the location of art they want to see.

## Microsoft Fixes Windows 95 Flaws

Two potential security problems with the Windows 95 operating software have been identified and fixed, publisher Microsoft Corp. says. The company told visitors to its World Wide Web page on the Internet that it discovered and fixed a problem with the file and printer sharing in the software.

The statement says, "Only customers who have enabled file and printer sharing -- a non- default option -- may have been at risk, and, to the best of our knowledge, no users have been harmed. Nevertheless, Microsoft regards this potential problem with the greatest seriousness and we have worked hard over the past week to resolve it."

The Reuter News Service notes Microsoft has sold more than 7 million copies of the new operating system since its release Aug. 24. In its online note, Microsoft said only customers that use the file and printer sharing option to share their fields with other users on a network are affected by the issue.

"To correct the problem," Reuters says, "Microsoft has issued an updated driver for file and printer sharing for Netware Networks that can be downloaded from the Internet or mailed to users. 'The updated driver ensures that only valid administrators have access to the computer's drive,' the company said."

## Survey Predicts PC Christmas

A new Gallup Organization survey finds a third of the respondents considering purchase of software as gifts this Christmas season, with another 52 percent saying they would rather find a new computer than new TV under the tree this year. Commissioned by Microsoft Corp., the survey of 1,012 American adults by phone in September (with a margin of error of +/- 3.1 percent) found:

´• 89 percent of those questioned considered software and computers to be good gifts for adults.
´• 92 percent said they consider these items to be good gifts for children 13 and older.
´• 77 percent said they think these items would make good gifts for children 12 and under.

According to a statement from Microsoft's Redmond, Washington, headquarters, "The survey revealed that Americans say they would rather receive computer software/computers over other popular electronic gift items, such as large screen color televisions, satellite television dishes, cellular phones, and home stereo systems." Also the survey found 63 percent of respondents felt software/computers have gotten easier to use compared to two years ago, and 59 percent felt computers have helped them reach their potential.

### 'Toon Characters Headed to CD-ROM

Japan's Vistec Ltd. has licensed 10 cartoon characters from King Features for use in four CD-ROM Fun House games. The first title, featuring Popeye, Blondie and Dagwood, and Prince Valiant, will be produced by Nevada-based Terence Boyle Productions Ltd for Vistec. The program is scheduled for a June release at a yet-to-be-announced price.

"This is the largest CD-ROM license agreement King has ever entered into," says Ita Golzman, senior director of domestic licensing for King Features. The initial CD-ROM will contain three games starring the featured comic characters. The disc also will include brief appearances by other comic characters, including Betty Boop, Hagar the Horrible and Beetle Bailey. King Features is a division of The Hearst Corp.

### Survey Suggests Low Win95 Home Base

A new independent survey suggests that, while many home computerists are aware of Microsoft Corp.'s highly publicized Windows 95, only six percent of the respondents say they have actually installed and are using the new operating system. The survey by San Francisco's Odyssey research firm, based on a random sample of 1,201 U.S. households with PCs, gave Microsoft high marks for making people aware of the new Win95.

Said Odyssey President Nick Donatiello, "Their well-orchestrated launch got them awareness in 92 percent of PC households. But all the hoopla hasn't convinced the majority of home PC owners that they need or want Windows 95." The survey found:

´• 41 percent of the respondents said they don't know enough about Windows 95 to have an opinion on the operating system.
´• 53 percent say they are not at all likely to upgrade in the next six months.
´• 22 percent of the respondents who are using Win95 said they have also signed up for the Microsoft Network. (Odyssey estimated that means only about 1 percent of the PC households in the U.S. are on MSN.)

The poll also released these top five reasons respondents said they had not upgraded to Win95:
1. "I don't need it/My current system is adequate" (29 percent).
2. "Costs too much/Don't want to spend the money" (19 percent).
3. "Waiting until bugs are worked out/next version" (15 percent).
4. "Would have to upgrade PC" (14 percent).
5. "Haven't gotten around to it" (10 percent).


The Kids' Computing Corner
by Frank Sereno

Let's Start Learning!
Hybrid Format CD-ROM for Windows and Macintosh
for children ages 2 to 5
retail price approximately $35
From The Learning Company
6493 Kaiser Drive
Fremont, CA 94555
1-800-852-2255

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                        Program Requirements
     IBM                                  Macintosh
CPU:          386DX/33                         CPU:          Color
Macintosh
RAM:          4 megs                           RAM:          4 megs
OS:             Windows 3.1 or higher          OS:           System
6.0.7
Video:        640 by 480 with 256 colors       Video:        256
colors
Hdisk:        1k for program group             Hdisk:        1k
CD-ROM:  Double-speed recommended          CD-ROM:  Double-speed
recommended
Misc.:          Sound card, printer
```

Let's Start Learning! is a fun and whimsical program which teaches children
basic learning skills such as letters, numbers, shapes and patterns. It
features four learning activities with four skill levels each, plus a fifth
activity as a carousel pony with changeable parts. Upon completing each the
activity, children will be rewarded with a key which can be used to change
the pony. Collect all sixteen keys and the pony takes your child on a ride
to the gates of The Learning Kingdom. Children will enjoy the many lovable
animal characters which include Reading Rabbit and Mat the Mouse.

The interface is very easy to use. Entry into the program is accomplished
by the child typing in his name and then going to the main screen. Up to
ninety-nine players can play and be tracked by Let's Start Learning! The
main screen shows pictures of the five activities and a stop sign.
Clicking on the stop sign exits the program while clicking on the activity
pictures will take your child to the corresponding activity. Mat the Mouse
stands in a corner of the screen and audibly explains how to operate the
program. An adult Program Options Pad, or POP for short, is available by
pressing Ctrl-P. The POP allows parents to adjust activity levels, check a
progress report on each child, and to learn more about the educational goals
of the activities. Each activity features a host who doubles as your
child's teacher. He will tell your child what is needed to complete each
problem and then present him with a reward upon completion. Feedback is
enthusiastic and positive for correct responses, but gentle and encouraging
for incorrect answers. The program manual contains many important tips
about teaching children and the operation of the program. It does not
include any troubleshooting information.

Pattern Parade teaches children to recognize and form patterns based on
size, color or musical instruments. Ben the Ant wants to lead a parade down
the street. Several musicians are standing on the street forming a partial
pattern. Children must choose the remaining members of the band from the
musicians sitting on the bench. As children advance through the levels, the
patterns become more complex. On the final level, they make their own
pattern using the available musicians. Children must pay attention to what
Ben says in the first three levels because he gives verbal hints to the
correct solution.

Counting and number recognition are the focus of the Counting Club. Ali the
Counting Cat coaxes children to find the number she calls out and displays.
Her friends are hidden in the trees and children must click on the windows
to bring the friends into the center room. Once the number of friends
matches the displayed number, children then click on Ali. They will learn
to count forward and backward, and also learn simple addition and
subtraction problems.

Shape Shack is a sorting game. Children must sort objects according to shape, sound, color or group. Mit the Monkey has dropped six objects on the floor of his treehouse. Objects must be placed in stacked boxes. On the first level, both stacks have a flag indicating the type of object belonging in that stack. On the second level, only one stack has a flag. On the last two levels, no flags aid the children in sorting. There can be as many as three different ways to correctly sort the objects. This activity develops visual and auditory recognition skills, vocabulary and following verbal instruction.

The final learning activity is ABC Diner. Here children will learn to recognize letter names and sounds, to recognize the initial sounds of words, develop vocabulary and to differentiate among different sounds. Ed the Dog and Reader Rabbit run a different kind of diner. The patrons choose the ingredients of the main course and then Ed fashions a "Surprise!" from them. Despite the strange combinations of ingredients, his culinary experiments are always a gastrointestinal delight. Perhaps another benefit of this activity will be that your children will try new foods with less trepidation after learning that Ed's customers enjoy ziti.   Your child's task is to find the correct ingredients from six storage compartments. On the first level, the exterior of each door is marked with a letter and Ed will announce that he needs an ingredient that starts with a certain letter. The second level requires the child to find an ingredient beginning with a specific letter sound. The exteriors of the bins are now unmarked, but the first letter of the object is displayed on the interior of the door. Reader Rabbit will then announce the letter sound and the name of the object when the door is opened. On the third and fourth levels your child must find a food item beginning with a specific letter. When the doors are opened now, Reader Rabbit will announce the contents but the letters will no longer be displayed.

The Carousel can be compared to recess or to naptime. Here children can just play without worrying about finding the correct answers to problems. In the center of the screen is a magic carousel pony. Below the pony is a large key. Turning that key starts the carousel. In the four corners of the screen will be pictures of the four activity hosts. Next to each will be a key ring holding four key silhouettes. As each level is completed in the activities, one key will become solid gold. Clicking on the keys will cause a part of the carousel pony to change. Your child can build four different ponies once he has obtained all sixteen keys. Next to Mat the Mouse is a small boom box. Clicking on it begins another fun activity. "The Jolly Jamboree" song begins. This is a follow-the-leader dance that young children always enjoy. The children are encouraged to dance along, thus taking a break from sitting at the computer and getting some exercise which will refresh their minds.

The graphics in this program are colorful and cute. Children will be attracted to the adorable animal characters. Most of the animations are excellent with lifelike motion. Some seem to drop a few frames. The sounds and music are excellent. The voice characterizations are exceptionally enthusiastic and delightful.

The activities are enchanting and enticing.   Older children can also be mesmerized by the songs and fun games. My one area of concern is replay value. It will take many hours for a child to gather the sixteen keys but will he want to play the game again once he has been to the gates of the Learning Kingdom?

The educational content of Let's Start Learning! is topnotch. The program provides many learning opportunities with specific objectives. Children

will gain many necessary learning skills for preschool and primary school
education. The Learning Company has developed a series of programs which
are nested for learning skills and goals. Parents can buy the next program
in the group to continue building on the skills learned in the previous
programs.

Let's Start Learning! is an excellent addition to your library of
educational software. It is an attractive and fun program based on sound
learning principles and executed through excellent design. The reasonable
price and thirty-day moneyback guarantee further enhances this product's
excellent value. Technical assistance is available toll-free. The Learning
Company has published a first-rate value in Let's Start Learning!

                              Ratings

                    Graphics 9.0
                    Sounds 9.5
                    Interface 9.0
                    Play Value 9.0
                    Educational Value .. 9.5
                              Bang for the Buck .. 9.5
                    Average 9.25

                              # # #

                    Franklin's Reading World
                available for Windows and MacIntosh
                         for ages 4 to 7
                      from Sanctuary Woods
                      1825 South Grant Street
                      San Mateo, CA 94402
                         415-286-6000

                         Program Requirements
        IBM   Macintosh
CPU: 386/33   CPU: Color Macintosh
RAM: 4 megs   RAM: 4 megs
OS: Windows 3.1   OS: System
6.0.7
Video: 640 by 480 with 256 colors   Video: 256
colors
Hdisk: 1 meg   Hdisk: ?
CD-ROM: Double-speed recommended   CD-ROM: Double-speed
recommended
Misc.:   Sound card, printer

Franklin's Reading World is a place of discovery and learning. Interesting
songs, fun activities and colorful graphics will entertain children while
they learn phonics, vocabulary, spelling and more. Your child joins
Franklin Turtle and his many friendly animal friends on a journey through
his neighborhood. The program has four areas to explore. These are
Franklin's Cozy Home, the Soccer Field, The Forest and The Pond. Each area
has several scenes. Eight words can be built in each scene or the child can
choose to play connected activities or click on hot spots to see animations.

Your child will guide Franklin as he travels around his home and rural
surroundings.   He will explore each scene by moving the cursor over the
images. If the cursor is placed over Franklin, it becomes a question mark
and clicking will start audible help. The cursor becomes a large blue arrow
to indicate a path to another exploration area. When the cursor is over a

hot spot, it will become a star. The cursor becomes the first letter(s) of
a Building Word when it is above that object.

Franklin or another character will pronounce the name of the object and asks
your child to spell it. The beginning sound will be placed on one side of
the screen and then four choices will be given to complete the word. Your
child must click on his choice. It will then be placed next to the
beginning sound and Franklin will pronounce the resulting word twice. The
first time he pronounces the beginning sound and the ending of the word
separately, and then the whole word. The letters he pronounces will be
highlighted as he speaks them. This will help children learn phonics and
spelling. If the choice is incorrect, Franklin will ask your child to try
again and the incorrect choice will be removed. Once the correct choice is
given, Franklin and his friends will talk about the object so that your
child can learn the meaning of the word.

All scenes include at least two selectable activities. If the cursor is
near the bookworm, it becomes a book. Clicking here begins the Building
Sentences activity. Your child will see a black and white picture based on
objects from the current scene. He must fill in the missing word in the
sentence. He will be given a choice of five words. Incorrect choices are
not removed so the child must remember which answers he has used. If he is
unfamiliar with a word on the sentence, the words will be spoken when
clicked on. When Franklin says each sentence, the words are highlighted and
he speaks slowly so each word is emphasized. When the correct answer is
given, the picture is colorized and the child also has the option of
printing a black and white picture for coloring. The exercise will teach
the children to use the words in the proper context.

Clicking on the snail starts the memory games. This activity consists
matching twelve cards. Three options are available. The first option will
have your child match identical pictures. Franklin will say the name of
each object as the card is turned. For the second option, he must match the
image to the written and spoken word. In the third option, the words and
objects will no longer be announced.

Three hidden activities are available also. Bear's Spelling Bee is accessed
by clicking on the beehive at the Soccer Field. This is a very difficult
exercise. Children are shown an object and they must spell its name. Bees
are flying across the screen dragging letters behind them. Children must
click on the correct letter as they fly by rapidly. This takes a great
amount of coordination and may frustrate some children. Adding to the
difficulty is that the program provides no assistance to the child to help
him spell the word. Incorrect choices are not removed after being chosen.
Franklin will not pronounce the target word again after he first announces
it so children cannot listen to the correct pronunciation to help them spell
phonetically. I think this portion of the program should have had controls
for the speed of the bees and more help for the child. Incorrect answers
should be removed or changed to the correct one so eventually the child can
only pick the right answer. Children will definitely need parental
assistance in this portion of the program.

The remaining two activities have no educational value but do build
coordination and mouse skills. The Jumping Frogs game is found at The
Pond. Children must click on the ten leaping frogs to capture them. The
game has three difficulty levels. This game was quite difficult and very
frustrating, even for this adult. The frogs simply move too fast. Maybe
the problem was magnified by using the Microsoft EasyBall since the
trackball must be rotated a considerable distance to move it from side to
side on the screen. My personal preference is that my children have the

more precise control of the EasyBall rather than the quick, but harder to control mouse.

The Creepy Crawly game is found in the Deep Dark Woods. This game also has three speeds which could be described as frustrating, more frustrating and unbearably frustrating. The game's objective is to click on bright eyes found in a dark whole to reveal creepy, crawly animals. While the animals are beautifully drawn and animated, this activity provides no educational benefit. In the least, Franklin could have named the animals as they were found. Since the entire program builds coordination and mousing skills, I see no need for these two activities and more educational activities should have been substituted.

The still graphics are gorgeous. This program is based on a series of beautifully illustrated books and great effort was made to equal the books. Some animation sequences might be missing frames as the action wasn't smooth. Character's mouths were not synched with their voices. The sound portion of the program was very good. The program offered interesting music and intriguing sound effects. The voice characterizations are spoken and acted well. The dialog between characters is educational and entertaining.

I thought the interface is fairly good but it could use improvement. It is a fairly typical point-and-click interface. I liked how the cursor changed shapes to indicate the availability different activities or options. Most activities offered audible help and feedback was very positive and enthusiastic. However, no icon is available to the user in each scene to quit the game. You must either hit the spacebar (which is not my intuitive choice) to return to the main menu or press Ctrl-Q to go to the quit options. Games can be saved in progress but it requires the input of a filename. This is not a task I would leave for children ages 4 to 7. The manual is very short and doesn't contain much information about solving problems running the program. Technical support is available by making a toll call to Sanctuary Woods' California headquarters.

Franklin's Reading World contains many interesting animations and songs to bring children back for more learning fun. Three of the activities would benefit from easier play or an adult control panel to regulate the games.

Educational value is high. Children learn phonics, spelling, vocabulary and sentence structure. If the two mouse skills activities had been replaced with learning opportunities, this score would be much higher.

Franklin's comes with a thirty-day unconditional guarantee. The program comes with a beautifully illustrated Franklin storybook, which is a $4.95 value. It's suggested retail price is $39.95 so it should be discounted to around $30. This is a very reasonable price. Sanctuary Woods also offers an interesting bonus. You can give a form and your receipt to your local school. School officials can send in this form to get a school copy for only a $7.50 handling and shipping fee. This program is called "Buy One, Give One Free" and it is an excellent opportunity for cash-strapped schools to build their software libraries.

                              Ratings

                    Graphics 9.0
                    Sounds 9.0
                    Interface 8.0
                    Play Value 8.0
                    Educational Value .. 8.5
                    Bang for the Buck .. 8.5

Average 8.5

                         # # #

                  World's Easiest Software
           CD-ROM and 3.5" Diskette for Windows
      Individual modules retail for $14.95, combo packs for $34.95
                      T/Maker Company
                      1390 Villa Street
                   Mountain View, CA 94041
                       415-962-0195

The World's Easiest Software series of programs makes desktop design work
easy enough for children and inexperienced computer users to be printing
high quality output in only minutes. The programs also offer the option of
purchasing professional printing of your designs by Deluxe Corporation, one
of the nation's largest specialty printing companies.

The series consists of six individual packages and two combo packages:

World's Easiest Certificates   World's Easiest
Custom Notes
World's Easiest Business/Personal Cards   World's Easiest
Invitations
World's Easiest Announcements   World's Easiest Stationery
World's Easiest Personal Image Bundle   World's Easiest
Business Image Bundle

The Bundle packages include the Business/Personal Cards, Stationery, Custom
Notes and World's Easiest Stamps and World's Easiest Memo & Note Pads. As
an additional bonus, the business bundle includes business graphics and
fonts while the personal bundle has personal images and fonts. All packages
include paper samples relevant to the function of the program from Paper
Direct.   The Bundle programs include business cards, envelope and
stationery stock. More paper products can be order by calling toll-free.
Samples are also included of the custom printing done by Deluxe including
raised ink, special stocks and notepads.

Designing any of the items can be done in a few simple steps. Just load the
program, then chose the item you wish to design by clicking on the
corresponding button. The program will then step the user through selecting
a design, choosing a logo and adding text. Help is available at every step
by clicking on its button. Once the design is finished, it can be printed
on the user's system or an order can be placed with Deluxe. Two order
methods are available, direct order via modem or by saving the design to
floppy disk and mailing it to the order center. Orders take from eight to
ten days to be filled and returned after arrival at the order center. Rush
service is available at an additional charge.

The programs do not run from the CD-ROM. It is merely used to install the
program on your hard drive. The CD-ROM does include some extra images which
are installed to the hard drive also. Any font on your system can be used
for printing out paper items. Logos can be imported in .TIFF, .BMP, .WMF or
.EPS formats for home or office printing. Deluxe's World's Easiest Print
Center can only duplicate black and white images that are .BMP, .TIFF or
.EPS format so your choices are limited if you want professional printing.
These images can be printed in other colors as designated by the user in the
program.

World's Easiest Software is an apt description. The directions are easy to

follow and the results are usually flawless. The availability of
professional printing at reasonable prices will be welcomed by home users
and small business owners. It will also benefit those who need professional
printing done but have no print shops nearby to meet their needs. The
programs are backed by a money back guarantee. T/Maker is offering an added
bonus in a $10 rebate for the purchase of $25 worth of printing or the
purchase of two software modules. If you have more questions, call 1-800-
730-EASY.

Other programs may be more flexible and allow more customization of the end
product, but they also require a more experienced user. This makes World's
Easiest Software an excellent choice for users new to DTP. Experienced
users can benefit from the professional printing features. The bundle
packages are especially good values. The money back guarantee makes this a
risk-free product so give it a try.

ACTIVISION'S ATARI 2600 ACTION PACK 3
IS RELEASED FOR WINDOWS 95

New Compilation Dishes Up a Dozen
Doses of Fast-Action Entertainment

Los Angeles, CA - Activision, Inc. (NASDAQ: ATVI)   challenges Atari 2600
game fans to beat their old scores with Activision's Atari 2600 Action Pack
3 which is now available on the Microsoft Windows 95 operating system. The
third title in the planned four-volume Action Pack series, Action Pack 3
features a dozen classic hit titles from the 1980s.

"With the release of Action Pack 3, gamers can enjoy hit titles of the past
on the advanced platforms of the present," stated Bobby Kotick, chairman and
CEO, Activision, Inc. "Action Pack 3 has widespread appeal to both younger
and older generation game fans."

Activision's Atari 2600 Action Pack 3 features such fast-action titles as
Private Eye, where players join Private Eye Touchˆ' in a zany search for
master thief Henri Le Fiend and his sinister gang; Space War, in which
players must use quick reflexes and concentration to simultaneously navigate
their starship, blast the opponent and connect with the space module before
they are destroyed; and Combat, where players operate a tank, biplane or jet
in head-to-head battle sequences through mine-ridden playfields.

Other titles featured in Action Pack 3 include Breakout, Star-Master, Canyon
Bomber, Checkers, Night Driver, Pressure Cooker, Title Match Pro Wrestling
and Yar's Revenge.

Activision, Inc. is a publicly held developer and publisher of interactive
entertainment software for Microsoft Windows and MS-DOS compatible,
Macintosh and other computers, as well as Nintendo, Sega, 3DO, and Sony
PlayStation game systems. Headquartered in Los Angeles with offices in
London, Tokyo and Sydney, the company sells and markets products under the
Activision and Infocom trade names.

of Microsoft Corp. in the United States and/or other countries.

# # #

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

ClickArt Ships Incredible Image Pak 25,000
The Most Incredible Image Library Available
Includes 25,000 Images, On-Line Catalog, Fonts, Design Handbook and More!

Mountain View, CA-T/Maker Company's ClickArt division, the worldwide leading supplier of art content, announced the release of the largest ClickArt package ever, the ClickArt Incredible Image Pak 25,000 in CD-ROM versions for Macintosh and Windows/DOS. ClickArt's best-selling Incredible Image Pak has exploded to over 25,000 all new images never before seen in a ClickArt product. This broad-ranging ClickArt portfolio includes full-color and black and white images in over 125 diverse categories and styles (from strictly business images to festive holiday cartoons) and 1,000 TrueTypeT ClickArt Fonts. ClickArt Incredible Image Pak 25,000 carries a targeted street price of $49.95.

"This package is essential for anyone building a ClickArt library," said Heidi Roizen, T/Maker President and CEO. "The huge selection of images and styles makes it suitable for every situation and the browser makes the images easy to locate, making this the largest, most versatile, easy to use clip art package on the market."

The Essential Desktop Publishing Partner

Offering the complete desktop publishing solution, the ClickArt Incredible Image Pak 25,000 comes with a bonus of 1,000 ClickArt Fonts in easy to use TrueTypeT format, a KudoT Image Browser which helps you find just the right image and a ClickArt Design Handbook & Visual Index. The handbook's design section is packed with tips, tricks, and techniques on how to improve the look of any document, while the visual index allows you easily browse through the images to find just the one you want.

T/Maker Company provides content software for consumer and business markets. Its products comprise the full line of ClickArt titles including the Incredible Image Pak 2,000, Art Parts, Famous Magazine Cartoons, ClickArt Studio Series, and ClickArt Cartoons for DOS, Windows and AppleT Macintosh. T/Maker distributes its products through all the major channels, including mass merchants, warehouse clubs, direct to consumer, superstores, and traditional resellers.

For more information on the ClickArt Incredible Image Pak 25,000 or any other T/Maker product, customers can contact customer service at (800) 9-TMAKER or (415) 962-0195.

# # #

At this point I would like to welcome two new writers to the staff. I believe you will find their debut efforts to be both informative and entertaining. The first writer, Angelo Marasco, will probably be writing one or two articles per month for this column. The second writer, Donna Lines, will review most of the DTP that I receive for review. Here's an autobiography of our first new writer:

My name is Angelo Marasco and I'm 34 years old. I am a Field Engineer for Eastman Kodak Company, servicing duplicating equipment and serving some of

the best customers in the world! My hobbies used to be collecting and repairing mechanical antiques and collecting big band era 78 rpm records until I bought a computer. My first experience with computers was with my TRS-80 Model 3 in the early '80's. Now I am a self-taught computer hobbyist trying to teach myself everything there is to know about computer hardware and software.

My wife, Celeste, and I are born-again Catholics who are very active in ministry in our beloved St. Jude Catholic Parish, hopefully reaching out to those in need physically and spiritually as God has called us. My main ministry focus is to let people know that a personal relationship with Jesus is not a lack of life but is an increase in the abundance of life. We are the parents of four wonderful children, Arthur, Darlene, James and Angelo. When they're not fighting, they are truly gifts from God!

If you would like to write to me, my e-mail address is QBTH34B@prodigy.com. Thanks for reading my work!

                        Thinkin' Things Collection 1
                  Hybrid format CD-ROM for Windows and Mac
                        For children ages 4 to 8
                         Estimated retail $40
                            Edmark Corp.
                            PO Box 3218
                       Redmond, WA 98073-3218
                          (206) 556-8484

                        Program Requirements

IBM		Macintosh	
CPU:	486	CPU:	Color Macintosh
RAM:	8 megs	RAM:	4 megs
OS:	Windows 3.1	OS:	System 6.0.7
Video:	640 by 480 with 256 colors	Video:	256 colors
Hdisk:	2 megs	Hdisk:	?
CD-ROM:	Double-speed recommended	CD-ROM:	Double-speed recommended
Misc.:	Sound card, mouse		
Optional:	Edmark TouchWindow, microphone		

review by Angelo Marasco

Thinkin' Things Collection 1 on CD by Edmark is an educational program which is designed to help children ages 4 to 8 to build thinking skills which hopefully will lead to increased learning ability. Although the recommended age range is 4 to 8, I found in reviewing this program that it appeals to any age, including adults. I had a lot of fun with it and never found it boring. Neither did my children when they could get me away from it. For adults, the great thing about this program is the amount of attention paid to parents and the amount of information available to parents both on the CD and in the user's guide.

I reviewed Thinkin' Things Collection 1 on a 486SX33 with 4MB of RAM and Windows 3.11. Edmark's system requirements state that 8MB are required, but to Edmark's credit, the package ran well, although it was slow and jerky at times.

Setup was simple and fairly quick. Thinkin' Things setup added an Edmark program group with a Thinkin' Things icon, and also Dear Parents, Registration, Edmark Software Demos and Help icons. The Help section and an updated video driver helped me to get the program to run on my system. The Dear Parents section led to a series of video clips of Edmark Vice President Donna Stanger explaining the concepts behind the different activities. Parents count in this place.

After starting the Thinkin' Things program, the opening screen appears with a moon rising behind selector boxes showing the six activities available: Oranga Banga, Feathered Friends, Toony Loon, Fripple Shop, BLOX - Flying Spheres and BLOX - Flying Shapes. Clicking on a box results in a delightful two or three-second musical or voice introduction, depending on the selection. A "Stop" button appears in each screen throughout the program. This makes it easy to leave an activity and to get out of the program altogether. Too many programs make it a chore or simply frustrating to exit, but not so with Thinkin' Things.

Oranga Banga features a hip orangutan musician named Oranga and his percussion instruments. His instruments include a snare drum, bass drum, cymbal, chimes, cow bell, triangle, gong and wood block. In "create" mode, the child uses the cursor to strike instruments and creates an original musical piece that Oranga will then play back when the play button is chosen. Another option is to select the "question and answer" button. In this mode, Oranga plays a pattern on his instruments and the child is invited to repeat the pattern. If the child makes a mistake, Oranga simply shakes his head and repeats the pattern again. If the child is again unable to repeat the pattern Oranga replays a small part of the pattern and asks the child to repeat it after him. After successfully repeating the small chunks of pattern, Oranga replays the entire pattern and invites the child to repeat it after him. The scenario continues until the child can imitate the entire pattern. Oranga then congratulates the child.

Oranga Banga features a "Grow Slide" in the question and answer mode which increases the difficulty as the child continues to correctly repeat the patterns. The child may also use the grow slide to adjust the difficulty level himself. Parents have the option of denying the child access to the grow slide. Oranga Banga also allows the child to make Oranga play the patterns in the dark which challenges the child's auditory skills.

Oranga Banga is pleasant, friendly and challenging. The increasing difficulty level creates an atmosphere of challenge and excitement that keeps things interesting for longer periods than would be possible without it.

Feathered Friends teaches children the concept of patterns, series and comparisons. Feathered Friends features an animated and very creative "bird-making machine." The choices for hats, body color, body pattern and shoes are presented as buttons on the face of the machine. A window near the top of the machine shows the result of the choices. After the child is finished making choices, he selects the "go" button and the machine goes into action. After much noise, clanking, clanging and some music, a mechanical chicken comes out and lays an egg which cracks open and hatches the child's creation.

In "create" mode, the child is allowed to create his own birds with a choice of hats, body pattern, body color and shoes. While this can be interesting for a while, the real fun and challenge come in "question and answer" mode.

Since Feathered Friends features a "Grow Slide" in "question and answer" mode just like Oranga Banga, the child is given simpler problems to work on earlier on and works toward more challenging problems. The child is presented with a series of three or four birds with different hats, body markings, body colors and shoes. He is then asked by a bird to make the missing bird. At lower challenge levels the child is only given one choice to make to put the missing bird together, either hat, body markings, body color or shoes. If he makes the correct decision, the machine goes into action and out comes the mechanical chicken to lay the egg containing the correctly formed bird. If the wrong choice is made, a bird in the series simply asks the child to please try again.

As the child continues to make correct choices, the difficulty level increases. The number of choices begins to grow gradually so that the child is eventually making two, three, then four choices to fit the new bird into the series properly. While the choices are increasing in number the challenge of the series also increases so that it becomes slightly harder to figure out what is needed to fit the new bird into the series. At these higher challenge levels, if the child makes an incorrect choice the birds will ask him to please try again. Buttons are gradually removed each time a mistake is made until only the correct buttons are left. This gentle guidance toward the correct answer is sure to keep children from getting frustrated and teaches them without them even knowing it. After the new bird has taken its place in the series, a bird thanks the child. The birds then leave the screen or are removed in various animated ways.

Feathered Friends is colorful and delightfully animated. It would be nice if Feathered Friends started in the "question and answer" mode since this is where children will spend most of their time because of the fun and challenge.

Toony Loon is a musician who specializes in the xylophone. This activity is very similar to Oranga Banga. Toony Loon opens in the "create" mode and Toony asks the child to go first. Unlike Feathered Friends, Toony Loon gives the child more of a reason to spend time in the "create" mode. The child uses the mouse cursor to strike the keys on the xylophone, then presses the "play" button to see and hear Toony Loon animatedly play back his musical creation. What I found really exciting and creative about Toony Loon were the choices of instruments available in "create" mode. By pressing the "new" button the child can choose to change from the standard xylophone to a xylophone using crystal glasses, hollow logs, rubber bands or chickens (yes, you read that right). For me, the chicken xylophone was the most entertaining. I've never heard "Mary Had a Little Lamb" on chickens before!

"Question and answer" mode in Toony Loon is similar to that in Oranga Banga. Like Oranga Banga, Toony Loon can be asked to play in the dark to help build auditory skills. The "Grow Slide" is also available here. Toony Loon plays a series of notes and asks the child to repeat them after him. As the challenge level increases, the series become longer. Toony congratulates the child in various amusing ways for a successful imitation. If the child makes a mistake, Toony repeats the series. After a second mistake, Toony will lead the child through three or four-note pieces of the series and asks the child to repeat it after him. If they make it all the way through together then Toony replays the entire series and asks the child to repeat it. Success is far more likely after this. Toony then congratulates the child for his success as if a mistake was never made which is reassuring and encouraging.

Toony Loon is my favorite character in the entire Thinkin' Things program. His pleasant manner of speech and his animated way of playing his xylophone make him an attractive character to spend time with.

The Fripple Shop is a very interesting activity that teaches children to use logic to follow orders which are given to them in spoken, written and both spoken and written forms. The Fripple Shop also introduces "boolean logic" through AND, OR and NOT.

The Fripple Shop is a little shop with a selection of twelve "Fripples," little creatures of different colors, shapes and various attributes. The shop is equipped with a telephone for voice orders and a fax machine for written orders. A variety of unusual customers show up at the door to give verbal orders that are also displayed in written format. A "Grow Slide" is also used in this activity to increase and monitor the challenge level.

The child can wait for a knock on the door or for the phone or fax machine to ring before answering. He can also select an object depending on his preference for verbal or written orders. Between knocks and rings the child may select any of the Fripples and an extremely animated voice describes the attributes of the Fripple the child has selected. The voice used to describe the Fripples and to tell the child when he has chosen the wrong Fripple for the customer is reminiscent of an old game show or radio announcer type voice. It is funny and stirs up excitement in the activity. The customers are also very unusual characters who stir up excitement every time the door is opened. Unfortunately, the customers do not move at all, even though the Fripples are constantly moving. This takes away some from the realism of the activity, but it is not a very big drawback.

At the lower challenge levels the child is given orders that include two attributes, usually a color and some other choice. These orders always use "AND" logic. As the challenge level increases, the orders grow to include three attributes and begin to introduce "OR" and "NOT" logic. If the child chooses the wrong Fripple, the voice tells the child that the decision was wrong in an animated tone. If the child makes a wrong choice again, the voice again announces that this is the wrong choice and a few Fripples are removed. This continues until either the correct choice is made or the correct Fripple is the only one left. After the correct Fripple is chosen, he hops off his perch to the door. If the order came in by fax or phone, the Fripple Shop truck is waiting outside the door. If the customer came to the door to order then he or she is joined by the Fripple.

The Fripple Shop is challenging and interesting. Because the Fripples change after each order is filled, the visual aspects of the activity are constantly changing which helps to keep interest high. I think that the voice used to describe the Fripples and guide the child when a wrong selection is made adds a lot to the activity and keeps it exciting.

BLOX - Flying Spheres is a sort of three-dimensional palette for the child to create moving works of art with floating colored spheres and music. This activity is supposed to help children to develop their creativity without putting the constraints of artistic ability on them. Judging by what I saw in this activity, this should be very successful.

The spheres are already available in a variety of colors and there are ten different three-dimensional backgrounds, or fields, available at the push of a button. The child is given tools to choose background types and colors, musical clips and sphere movement. With fourteen different musical clips available it is easy to find a type of music to match the child's creative mood. I feel that the musical clips could be longer since they began to get on my nerves with their repetitiveness after a while. However, it didn't seem to affect my children in the same way. They seemed to hardly notice the repetition. The "ideas" button brought up some very interesting creative

ideas that led to many other ideas once it was seen what could be accomplished with the spheres.

The mouse cursor is used to select a sphere and drag it to the field. The sphere can then be placed in motion or left standing still depending on the speed and direction of the mouse. I had trouble getting the spheres to stand still while trying to create different patterns. This could be a frustrating problem for younger hands without a lot of mouse coordination. Although there is a "freeze" button, it doesn't seem to affect spheres that are place on the field after it is pressed. I found that it was easy to believe that I was choreographing the motion of the spheres to the music when I got enough spheres onto the field. This makes it simple for the child to believe that he is making a truly choreographed work of art and should help to build creative self -esteem. I wish that BLOX - Flying Spheres would allow individual control of the spheres with the sphere motion buttons. That would give the child even more artistic control over the finished work.

BLOX - Flying Spheres is an interesting foray into three-dimensional creativity with something you would not normally consider very controllable or artistic - floating bubbles. However, Flying Spheres pulls it off in a fascinating way that will hold a child's attention for quite a while.

BLOX - Flying Shapes is similar to Flying Spheres. It uses one single background with a choice of three different sets of shapes. Each shape has its own unique sound which it would make when it was released and when it hit the edge of the field. BLOX - Flying Shapes allows the child to create a musical work of art again without the constraints of artistic ability. Here the music or sounds come from the shapes themselves. The tools available in Flying Shapes allow the child to resize the shapes and to put them into motion in different ways. This was also possible through mouse cursor control of the individual shapes. Again, it was difficult at times to hold the shapes still when trying to create a form and this could be frustrating for younger children. I would also like to see a button to hold creations together when they are put into action. It is frustrating to spend time putting a creation together only to see it turn into something completely different when it reaches the edge of the field. The "ideas" button came up with some extremely interesting creations and suggestions, sometimes more tantalizing than those in Flying Spheres.

BLOX - Flying Shapes turned out to be a little flat and corny compared to Flying Spheres but was still interesting. I don't know if it can hold the interest of children as long as Flying Spheres might, but it is still an entertaining learning activity. Plus, if it can build up creative self-esteem in children, as I think it will, then it is worthy of its place in Thinkin' Things.

Overall, I found Thinkin' Things Collection 1 to be a very high quality piece of software. It is colorful, graphically rich and very entertaining. The sounds and music were of high quality and there were a great many choices where choices were allowed. The interface was excellent. My children could immediately begin using the program with very little input from me. The play value was great but it was not outstanding. I can see areas where children may lose interest after short periods, especially in the "create" modes in Oranga Banga and Feathered Friends. The educational value of this software cannot be questioned, especially when it is so clearly explained to you in the manual and in the Dear Parents area on the CD. Edmark says that the purchase price is approximately $40. Although I suspect that it may be possible to find Thinkin' Things Collection 1 on CD for less, even at $40 the program deserves a high Bang for the Buck rating. I don't think that my kids will tire of this program anytime soon. Neither will I. What better

value is there than that? Thinkin' Things Collection 1 on CD tastefully combines education and entertainment in a package that appeals to parents as well as children. I think any parent can be proud to add this program to their software collection.

Ratings

Graphics 9.5
Sounds 9.0
Interface 9.5
Play Value 8.0
Educational Value .. 9.5
Bang for the Buck .. 9.5
Average 9.17

# # #

Our next writer didn't want to do her own bio, so I will write one for her. Just as Chicago politicians pad their payrolls with relatives, I too, have added a relative to the staff at STR (unfortunately, we don't get paid). Donna is my sister. She works for a major utility company. After working a hard eight hours, she glows! She and her husband Doug have one son, Paul, who plays guitar when he isn't being a student. I won't give away my sister's age by mentioning how long she has been married or the age of her son! During summer months she is a golf widow. (FORE!) Donna has a great affinity for animals and is currently training her Sheltie pup, Mickey.

She has a Gateway2000 computer system in her home office. The office is decorated with several black and white cows, naturally. She has been doing DeskTop Publishing for several years now. She uses several major programs including CorelDRAW and Microsoft Word to design cards, newsletters, resumes and more. Her latest acquisition is an HP ScanJet 4c. Needless to say, she is very serious about DTP. When she makes a purchase, she tirelessly researches competing products and will settle for nothing but the best. In the time-honored tradition of STR, she tells it like it is. Her opinions are always honest, clear and heartfelt.

CLICKART'S BUNDLE UP FOR THE HOLIDAYS CD ROM
Review by Donna Lines

Whether you use Windows or Macintosh, you'll find just the right clip art image to accent your holiday greetings on the ClickART Bundle Up for The Holidays CD-ROM (T/Maker Co., Mountain View, CA). This CD-ROM contains over 400 high-quality colorful clip art images for Christmas, Chanukah, New Years, Thanksgiving, Halloween and more. ClickART has created 200 brand new holiday images for 1995 and included their 1994 Holiday clip art as an added bonus.

ClickART includes an image browser so you can see the images in full color to help you select an image quickly and easily. You can also import directly from the CD in Windows Metafile format into any program that accepts WMF images such as Print Artist (Sierra), CorelDRAW (Corel Corp.), etc. You can also use ClickART's familiar DOS-based image exporter to export these images to your favorite software program that accepts any of the following formats: CGM, WMF, TIF, PCX, EPS, AI or Print Shop Deluxe images.

ClickART also includes 20 True Type Fonts to add impact to your Holiday message:

Aidan, Banco, Bangle Condensed, Bow, Brando, Engaged, England, Expose Thin
Condensed, Galant Extended, Glaze, Ironwork Wide, Jott 43, Lynda, Mythology,
New England Engraved, Persia, Revive 8, Sojourn, Terra, and Viviene

The documentation is quite thorough with the exception that there are no
samples of the included True Type Fonts. T/Maker offers full Technical
Support for this product. There is something for everyone in this Holiday
Bundle.

IBM Compatible System Requirements for Windows and DOS: 286 or higher, CD-
ROM Drive, DOS 3.3 or higher, Windows 3.0 or higher. (Windows 95
compatible).

Macintosh System Requirements: 68020 Processor or better, CD-ROM Drive.
Recommended: 4 MB Ram, 2 MB hard disk space, System 7.

                              # # #

I hope that everyone enjoyed the festive Thanksgiving holiday. Now we have
four weeks to work off this week's feast to prepare for that big Christmas
dinner. ;-) I'd appreciate comments on our new contributors and on my
regular writings as well. Send e-mail to fsereno@matrix.uti.com. As
always, I thank you for reading!

Dvorak Christmas Offer STR Infofile

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orderer:_____

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Address:_____

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NavCIS Pro for Windows and Windows 95:
     Quantity: _____ (Each NavCIS unit comes with a complete CompuServe
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           NavCIS Pro Price: $69.00*
                CompuServe Starter Kit: FREE   Specify format: CD-ROM:
____   3.5" Diskette: ____
                     OUI: _____
                   Shipping**: _____
                  Total: $_____

*You may also include OUI for an extra $19.00 (regularly $39.00.).   Inclue
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   To:_____  From:_____
Msg:_____
                          (Example: To: Bobby  From: Dad  Message: Lots of
love -- see you on CompuServe!)

**Shipping and Handling:
     48 States:          US Priority Mail, $5.00
     Alaska & Hawaii:    US Priority Mail, $5.50
     Canada, Mexico:     US Air Mail $7.50
     International:      US Priority Air Mail, $17.00

Method of Payment:
     __ Visa                  __ MasterCard / EuroCard
     __ American Express      __ Discover
     __ Check # _____

Card Number:_____  Expiration date: ____/____
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Upgrade policy
Upgrades are FREE within a version series. However we do not provide
upgrades on diskette, only via download. Upgrades can be downloaded from
our CompuServe forum (GO DVORAK), or from our soon to be enabled Web site
and FTP site (http://www.dvorak.com and ftp.dvorak.com).

Sending your order to Dvorak Development
Thank you for your order. Orders may be e-mailed to 71333,12.   If you are
concerned about security, please use fax or Snail Mail. Orders may also be
placed over the phone to 303-661-0345. We are open from 8:30am to 5:30pm
MST (GMT - 7, EST - 2, PST + 1) Mon. thru Fri.

Deadline
To ensure we have enough time to get this order either to you or to your
intended recipient, please e-mail or fax your order to us no later than:
USA, Dec. 17. International: Dec. 10. We accept personal and company
checks. All orders are shipped with an invoice enclosed.

                    The Office of the Future
            Fall 1995 Comdex Keynote Address- November 14, 1995
            Bill Gates, CEO and Chairman, Microsoft Corporation

MR. GATES: Good morning.
   It's great to be back at Comdex in Las Vegas.
     There are a lot of really big milestones this year. Microsoft
celebrated its 20th year anniversary. I turned forty years old. That means
for the majority of my life I've had the same job, same job title. When I
started out it was tough being young, I couldn't rent a car, people wanted
to have meetings in bars I couldn't go in.
     Now, I go into review meetings on the products, and these hip
programmers are making jokes about "Friends" and "ER" and things I just
don't understand, so maybe I'm a little too old. I told Jay Leno that I was
turning forty and he suggested that maybe I'm the Mick Jagger of the
software industry. And I'm still trying to figure out, is that a compliment
or what does that mean?
     Well, I could spend the next 60 minutes talking about Windows 95. So I
thought I'd ask, are there people here who have not heard of Windows 95?
          (Laughter)
     It looks like maybe we can stop running our ads now.
     What I do want to talk about is how personal computers have helped

knowledge workers. What have they done to make those jobs more effective?

   If we go back twenty years and we think about the earliest personal computer, this MITS Altair with the paper tape BASIC, I think it's fair to say that this did not help knowledge workers at all. It was a kid's computer, you would go home at night, try and put the thing together, about half the people who bought it actually successfully got it put together. The programs would blink the lights. At best you could play tic-tac-toe, but it was kind of a miracle that individuals could own a computer, and it was fascinating to put it together and figure it out.

   Now, over the next several years, products did come along like Electric Pencil or WordStar or VisiCalc. But I think we can say that it was really in 1981, with the advent of the IBM Personal Computer and Lotus 1-2-3 shipping in 1982, that started to bring computers into the business world, where people could think, "Hey, this will help us get our jobs done in a better way."

   Another major milestone was in 1985, and this is when the Macintosh came along and gave us the graphical interface. At first it was a little slow, but it really became a foundation for the last decade of innovation. Things like the integration that we've got now are really so far beyond what we had back in 1985.

   The desktop productivity category, if you look at software publishing data of all of the software sold on PC's, is 59 percent of all software sold.

   The second biggest category is utilities, and most of those utilities are to solve problems created by desktop application software.

   And so this is overwhelmingly the biggest thing going on the machines that are sold into business. People are primarily using these applications. Over 80 percent of the world's documents are now created with these applications.

   The improvements of the last ten years have been evolutionary. Every couple years there's a major new version, a lot of competition, and I think, because of that evolutionary nature, it's easy to miss how far we've come. Integration used to mean cut and paste. It didn't carry the font across or any of the other attributes, but it was kind of a miracle. You could even take the characters from one application to another.

   Now we not only preserve those things, but we support arbitrary objects with the plug in architecture out there. Any applications, not only from one company, can be pulled together in an integrated fashion. We have a great deal of economization now making the screen look like what it wants. The computer provides tips to help you out. There's been a very rapid shift over the last three years towards buying office suites. During the last two years, we've increased our number of Microsoft Office users by a factor of four.

   And with that paradigm of letting those things work together, documenting techniques in one way has brought a dramatic change.

   I can just give you a few personal examples of why I'm an excited user of these products. A recent advance is this thing called Spell-It. As you're typing your document, it puts a little red underline under any words that look suspicious, that are misspelled, and, of course, you just use the right mouse button, click, and it suggests how you might want to properly spell the word.

   It's amazing how many words I've been misspelling all of these years. Nobody ever told me. Maybe it's because of my job title or something. The nice thing now is when I get mail from other people it automatically runs Spell-It across what they're sending to me, so I can see the spelling errors they're making too.

       (Laughter)
   Another big thing for me is WordMail. The ability to take all of the richness I've got in the word processor -- revision marks, putting in an outline, different text -- the fact that all day long I'm in the word

processor means I don't need to boot it up again when it's creating a document or reading mail. I'm just there with all of that richness, which means that I can use the advanced features, because that's the only text editor that I need to work with.

Another big thing for me is Pivot Tables. Whenever I'm going to visit a country, I want to quickly look and say "How are the sales? How did their sales compare to the United States? Where are they ahead of budget? Where are they behind budget?" And the Pivot Table is a fantastic way of doing that. You can look at it in different time periods, zoom in on detail, even go into sub-regions of the country. And the contrast between trying to look at printed information about sales data, just in one view that's always too detailed to really figure out what's going on, versus having these Pivot Tables is being able to mail them around, say to people, "Hey, what do you think of this?" It's not an executive information system, where just a few people are seeing it. Everybody is looking at the same data and talking about the same results.

Today we want to share a vision of where office software is going in the years ahead. Some of the things we'll show will take us a couple major releases to get to, but these are things that we're working on today that I think are very exciting.

We call this the personalized, connected office.

A big part of this is going to be taking advantage of the revolution in communications that's taking place right now.

Of course, this means the Internet. The Internet is kind of like a gold rush, the amount of excitement, the number of new companies, it's really unbelievable. Now fortunately this is a gold rush where there really is gold.

It may be buried a little deeper than some people think, but the drops in the price of communication, the fact that PC's everywhere will eventually have very high speed data rates allowing them to work together, really will have a fundamental impact. In fact, it will mean that our industry will be changing the way people do business, the way they learn, and even the way they entertain themselves, far more than I think people outside our industry expect.

The Internet, the breadth of its impact, really struck me a few days ago when I was in downtown Seattle. I just had a meal and I was walking back to my car, and somebody came up to me asking me for some money. I wasn't quite sure what to do, but then this person mentioned that they have a URL, and I thought whether they do or not, that's such a good line I gave the guy $5.

(Laughter)

And, you know, for all I know this is a homeless guy who's got a home page.

The whole Internet thing, it's a little strange. I mean there's more new magazines being started about the Internet than anything else. Here at the show you go to booths, people are talking about the Internet. Why doesn't the Internet itself allow those things to happen?

Could the Internet ever be a way that the industry gets together and shares things? Well, we've got a lot of work to do to make it be that kind of vehicle, but this gold rush atmosphere is getting people to invest in some great approaches and many of those will pay off and really deliver on the promise that's out there.

Now, it's always hard to talk about future software, and so what we've done here is something that we tried before, and that is to make a little movie, a little story that's set in the future where Office plays a role It sort of provides the special effects for the story here.

The setting is a small town called Kelseyville. This is the kind of little town you might have gone to when you were young, and where there was a nice resort. This town is faced with a bit of a dilemma, because the resort that was the lifeblood of the town has been shut down, and now

they're trying to decide should they make it into a historic landmark, or should they develop it into a shopping mall as a commercial development. So, let's go and see how this story unfolds.

(Act I of movie.)

MR. GATES: What are we seeing here with Office so far? We've seen a very deep level of integration. The first thing that happened was that Martha went into her desktop and she had projects, four different projects that she was able to choose from. The project contained all of the customized information. There are the four projects, she picks up one, and up it comes. It's a whole workspace, with business cards and documents. This workspace happens to have the schedule open right now and is showing all of the events, when she started working on the documents, when the documents are due. It's very easy to get into, and you don't have to think about particular applications or directories. All the data is there in one place.

One of the documents, the most important one, is this proposal for the shopping mall. And there we saw that information of all types were brought together. We had a movie, we had sales projections, we had charts, and as we saw her use that she was able to navigate very easily. Different files were involved.

(Refers to video of screen sequence.)

This is a unified table of contents here. Over on the left it's like an outline to go to the different pieces. You navigate through without ever starting up a program or even knowing what's being invoked, so there's an object architecture there, an integration of use interface to share across all of those different document types.

Finally, we had the idea of bringing time into the picture, integrating your work with the schedule. You can go back in your calendar and see how on a particular day what documents you edited, when you started, what you did, and look at the version that you were working on that day. All of it's tied into your different meeting times. The calendar can even blink when something is due, like the document we see there. The Assistant, which is down in the lower right there, is actually recommending that a meeting be scheduled by looking at different business bits for all of the people involved.

All that's taking place across the Internet. All of the different appointments are easy to pull together. It's the intelligent Assistant that makes that easy. Looking forward in time and looking back, the journaling keeps track of all of that history and makes it very accessible.

(Act II of movie.)

MR. GATES: Now, we've seen a number of cases where this idea of IntelliSense has been taken to a new level. IntelliSense is watching how a particular user works with documents, and therefore is able to suggest things that are going to be helpful. A first example we saw of that was as the mall document was being put together, the Assistant suggested that maybe the author would like to look out on the Internet and find related documents. By having natural language technology, you can find the proper nouns, you can know what the context of the documents is and you can highlight exactly those words and use those for a rich kind of search.

(Refers to video of screen sequence.)

After that search was done we went out and we were able to find a couple of things and they're marked according to a little summary, including whether it requires a license fee to use those documents. Of course, you can easily drag and drop those things and either link to them or use a portion of those documents in terms of what you want to create. Another thing we saw was a meeting taking place where the personal computer, through presentation software, was being used along with audio conferencing, and so we had the new kind of simultaneous voice data modem.

At the end of the meeting, the Assistant asked, "What about the meeting summary? Should it be sent to other people? Should it be just the action items?" And that was all done very automatically. In fact, the meeting

summary highlighted different things, and no effort was required. You can see the names here are linked so you can send e-mail to those people, and any of the documents that were used would be referenced there as well. So it's a case where you really get automatic help as you go along.

(Act III of movie.)

MR. GATES: Well, here we've used the Internet a couple of different times to do important things. In the previous act we actually went out and created an on line version of the document and were able to look at that. And so we call up a dialog box that we'll see here that lets us go out and have that online edition. We could register it in various directories, such as Lycos, and we could notify the registered readers so they would have mail in their inbox telling them that there's a new document out there.

(Refers to video of screen sequence.)

Another thing we saw was the meeting between Bob and Stan, and here they're working together, and there's something very important here which is that they didn't have to learn any new applications. They didn't have to learn any new commands. They were simply using Word and working on the same document.

They didn't have to define roles for each other. It simply showed them the two different cursors that were in the document, and either of them could go to the same section of the document, and they could each edit at the same time. That kind of collaboration across the Internet can work very, very easily with today's applications and nothing extra to learn. And, of course, this can extend to all of the different applications that people work with.   Well, our story is moving towards a quick climax, so let's get back and see how it wraps up.

(Act IV of movie.)

MR. GATES: Well, we've got this very complex meeting taking place and different people want to make comments and have side conversations. You're presenting rich types of information, so that the town planners are able to make little annotations to each other. As the questions come in, they're logged together with the slides so that you can go back and the moderator can select the right one, really making this kind of event work well, even allowing people who aren't at the meeting to watch as it goes on and later to come back and capture some of the dynamics of what took place there. Multiple streams of input again are being integrated together, bringing the rich kind of conferencing that can make these meetings more effective.

Another thing that we saw here was the idea of customization. The mayor, Alice, had a third party component that was plugged in that let her see traffic data in a nice map view. She was able to customize that, pull the data in which was probably in an Excel table, and pull it up onto her map. She could then simulate what this new traffic pattern might look like there and see that there was really a problem. You've got lots of end user customization, allowing you to see data in a very new way.

(Closing act of movie.)

MR. GATES: We saw a number of pieces there that define our vision of this personalized, connected office. We saw the advance in integration, eliminating the idea of the independent applications. We saw a great exploitation of the Internet, so that inside a company information is easily available and it also breaks down the boundaries between a company and its customers, or between a company and its vendors. All of the information is there, easily viewable, easy to collaborate in creating.

We saw big advances in IntelliSense where the user tells us what their preferences are and we see over time exactly what they're doing in helping them out.

We saw big advances in natural language. That's an area where for almost a decade we've been making major investments, and just now the speed of the machines, the size of the memory, all of the elements have come together with this new software to allow us to bring this into the office and allow it to be more effective.

And, finally, we saw a component architecture where people use the pieces that they're interested in, including the ability to plug new things in that leverage off of the richness that the Office platform is able to provide.

Now, there's a number of enabling pieces that have to come into this besides the software. We do need faster processors. Fortunately, we have Moore's Law working for us as well as billions in investments that the chip industry is making. So, in the next few years we will have speed that's more than adequate for everything we saw.

We also want the presentation to be easier to work with, the animation, the motion video. And so the graphics capability has got to improve, and that's on a very fast track as well.

Some of these new input techniques will also be important. The video camera that lets you video conference, and it will also let you make gestures that the Office software can understand. Voice input, pen input, we believe those are all complimentary to the keyboard which will continue to be a primary way of getting lots of text into the system.

Now, to make using all of this easy, the communications hardware is going to have to be built in. There's many different generations of communications. Within an office in the local area network, we're moving up to a hundred megabit speeds and we're getting the kind of quality of service guarantees that allow you to pass audio and video across that local area network. But the hard problem is when you move to the wide area network and you're trying to reach out to other people, what kind of connectivity do you have?

If we just use today's phone system with modems, that's what we call narrowband. Sort of the ultimate speed we'll get out of that is about 28.8 KB that's moving into the mainstream. But an important characterization to it is the simultaneous voice data, DSVD, and that really lets you know whether it's discussing a contract or getting product support or ordering something out of the catalog. It really makes it far more social and yet gives you the richness of the computer display as part of that conversation, and being able to hook up those connections by finding a Web page and saying that you want some advice, you want someone to talk to you. That will all become very seamless now.

We also need to take narrowband communication out and make it easily available on a wireless basis for people who are working in a mobile fashion, and that will take a couple more years before the infrastructure is in place.

During that same time period, though, we expect a very rapid move to the next generation that we call mid-band. We're very excited about ISDN. The ease of setup is improving. The price of the hardware is coming down, the monthly charges are coming down, and ISDN, because it's about five times faster, really makes a qualitative difference.

Today those images that seem a little bit slow out on the Internet will be very, very snappy. Still image performance at midband is really, really excellent.

Another flavor of midband that's not quite as far along but will also be important, is the cable modem, taking the coaxial infrastructure that the cable TV companies built for broadcast video and using that to tie your PC in at data rates about the same as ISDN, or perhaps even a little bit better.

At midband, we can do some video capability, but it's a little bit like still images are in narrowband. It works, but it's not perfect. For example, you wouldn't want to watch a movie sitting there with a midband connection. For a business meeting it works, and I think it would be very popular.

The ultimate is still broadband, and that means providing data rates of several megabits or more. Now, this has been the Holy Grail of the so-called information superhighway. A couple years ago some communication companies were really talking about how many millions of people they'd connect up in

the next few years. Well, a little bit of reality has snuck in here and they're realizing that the revenue opportunity for connecting broadband up to homes is going to take quite some time to develop. The prices have got to come down. The applications have to be far better than they are today.

And so the concrete evolution is moving towards midband, and then using that as the base point to eventually get to broadband. Broadband will happen, and it will be important. Using technologies like the optic fiber, asynchronous transfer mode and ADSL. We've got that in front of us but not as a revolutionary step, not as a big bang, simply as something that we'll move to step by step.

Now, the goal of all of the things we've been talking about is to empower users. We want people to have more effective meetings, to have fewer meetings, to be more in touch with the things they want to do.

If you look back ten years ago to somebody writing a Ph.D. thesis, using a Selectric typewriter, hiring somebody to do that, and compare what that will be like as this round of Office comes around, where you've got the richness of the Internet, you can send out versions to your reviewers, get their comments and organize things very easily.

Imagine a small business person who wants to just focus on particular tasks. They can be alerted when their financial data shows something that's out of line, be alerted when a customer has a request. Small business people will be able to connect to this electronic world on an equal basis with large businesses, and the authoring tools they'll use, they'll want to work for online and in the print world simultaneously, so we want to take all of the learning that's been done on these tools and carry that over.

We need better decision-making, the kind of Pivot Table connection to database, ways of visualizing information and passing that around. This process will help all businesses, particularly large businesses where coordination is a major, major issue.

We also create flexibility. People can work wherever they are and be in touch, whether it's somebody who wants to do tele-commuting, work out of their house, work part-time, be a consultant, or whether it's a sales person out on the road who wants to make sure they know the status of orders who wants to be able to communicate back to headquarters ideas and customer information very easily.

All of that will be enabled by office productivity software, so I hope you can tell I'm very excited about this future vision. It really is something the whole industry needs to pull together the pieces for. Better hardware here for the desktop applications part of the market that's the majority of PC sales, better software from lots and lots of companies, better communications infrastructure, and perhaps most importantly, the solution providers, the people who have provided the consulting and training, and take these standardized building blocks and put them together in a way that's meaningful for the incredible variety of uses that are out there.

I really think this is an incredible opportunity for all of us.

Thank you.

(Applause)

                          Stonekeep
                       The Wait is Over!
                    The Experience Begins!!

STONEKEEP FAQ Version 0.1

by Doug Swarin

Please note that this version of the FAQ is highly preliminary, as I have
not yet completed the game (and will have to run through it a few more times
to get a complete FAQ).

Throggi
[4.8] Temple of Throggi
[4.9] First Level of Feeding
Grounds
[4.10] Second Level of Feeding
Grounds
[4.11] Dwarven Clanhall
[4.12] Faerie Realm
[4.13] Caverns of Ice
[4.14] Gate of the Ancients
[4.15] The Pits
[4.16] Palace of Shadows
[4.17] First Level of Tower of
Shadows
[4.18] Unknown (Temple of Thera?)
[4.19] Second Level of Tower of
Shadows
[4.20] Third Level of Tower of
Shadows
[4.21] Fourth Level of Tower of
Shadows
[4.22] Lair of the Dark Dwarves

[5.0] Other Stuff
[5.1] Notes
[5.2] Credits
[5.3] Copyright

[1.0]
                    Questions about Stonekeep
[1.1] What is Stonekeep?
Stonekeep is an interactive fantasy computer role-playing game, if you
believe in such mouthfuls. It's been in development for five years and has
become a legend among those who are waiting for it. It uses step-based
movement and the characters are a combination of computer graphics and
costumed actors.
[1.2] Who makes it?
Stonekeep is made by Interplay. One of the chief designers is Chris Taylor,
who can be found on the internet as anarchy@netcom.com.
[1.3] What kind of a game is it?
Stonekeep is a role-playing game, embodying combat, character development,
and puzzle elements.
[1.4] When will it be out?
Stonekeep arrived in stores on November 8th, 1995. If you're reading this
FAQ, it's available.
[1.5] What kind of system does it require?
Stonekeep requires a 486 system with at least 8 megs of ram and a single-
speed CD-ROM drive. VGA and SVGA are supported. The recommended system is a
486/66 or higher with 16 megs of ram and a double-speed CD-ROM drive.
[1.6] Are there any known bugs?
Of course there are. Wahooka sometimes refuses to appear on the second level
of the Ruins of Stonekeep when you have things to give him. This bug does
not markedly affect gameplay. Iaenni's speeches are not captioned, which can
be a problem if you have sound off or are deaf. Also, you MUST finish the
Faerie realm before going on to the Ice Caverns and freeing Enigma. If you
free Enigma first, he will leave your party and you will be unable to enter
the faerie realm without game problems. Lastly, if you have all nine orbs

and die, sometimes when you attempt to reload you get an error about LEVER_UP.MSP not found in file GROUP16.

[2.0]
Hints and Frequently Asked Questions

[2.1] Miscellaneous Hints

[2.2] How do I get magick?
You'll need to find a runecaster. The first one is on the second level of Stonekeep, in Mage-Icarius' laboratory. You'll need to find both the ivory and iron keys on this level to get in. There's also a mana circle there.

[2.3] How do I open the sliding walls in the Sewers?
You'll need to find one of the cylinders in the sewers. You'll notice that Drake stubs his toe when you are in the same square as one.

[2.4] How do I drain the Sewers?
You'll need to find both cylinders to drain the sewers. Note that some of the enemies in the sewers cannot be killed until it has been drained.

[2.5] How do I enter the Underlands?
You'll need to get the Dragon Statuette from the three-tentacled monster in the sewers, which cannot be killed until they have been drained. There is an illusionary wall in the sewers near where you find the three-tentacled monster. You'll need Farli to get you through the locked door after the illusionary wall, and then place the Dragon Statuette on the pedestal to open the way.

[2.6] How do I find the Faerie Realm?
In the second level of the Feeding Grounds, there are many purple blobs floating around. Find a primrose and drop it in the square where the faerie glows teleport out to open a gate to the Faerie Realm. You'll need to have freed Vermatrix Goldenhide in order to get very far in the Faerie Realm.

[2.7] Level Connection Diagram
A A. Entrance to the Ruins of Stonekeep BB B.
Ruins of Stonekeep,
Level 1 CCC C. Ruins of Stonekeep,
Level 2 D| D. Sewers Beneath Stonekeep
EE E. Sharga Mines, Level 1 FF F.
Sharga Mines, Level 2 GG G.
Entrance to the Temple HH H.
Temple of Throggi III I.
Feeding Grounds, Level 1 J|JJ J.
Feeding Grounds, Level 2 K|| K.
Dwarven Clanhall L| L.
Faerie Realm MM M.
Caverns of Ice NNN N.
Gate of the Ancients O| O.
The Pits PP P.
Palace of Shadows Q-Q---Q Q.
Tower of Shadows, Level 1 | | R.
Unknown (Temple of Thera?) SS | S.
Tower of Shadows, Level 2 TT | T.
Tower of Shadows, Level 3 UU| U.
Tower of Shadows, Level 4 V V.
Lair of the Dark Dwarves

[3.0]
Combat and the Stonekeep Dance

[3.1] Combat and the Stonekeep Dance

The Stonekeep Dance is the best method for killing enemies up until the Palace of Shadows. Throw axes and daggers, run past, pick them up, and

repeat. If you have a crossbow or bow, use that instead of throwing the axes and daggers. Usually you can make quick work of most opponents except Throgs. Throgs take patience and good reflexes to kill.

Later in the game, killing stuff with weapons becomes increasingly ineffective. The best tactic I've found so far is to boost up a firebolt rune and make sure you have at least a magic skill of four so it only costs 1 mana for a firebolt + potency + double-power + area effect rune. Then just hurl them at your opponents. If there is a mana circle nearby, this tactic is incredibly effective and wonderfully quick (except for trips back to the mana circle). If there is no mana circle nearby, make sure to conserve your mana carefully. Note that your companions have unlimited mana, and enigma, Sparkle, and Wahooka have long-range attack capability (which is very helpful). Farli also hurls firebombs, but only rarely.

The only enemies that can go through doors are the floating skulls in the Palace of Shadows. I haven't found anything else that can. A good technique is to open a door and shoot or throw through it at your opponents to soften them up or kill them.

[3.2] Companions

Farli (Dwarf): Farli is the first companion you will find, very trustworthy, and a good fighter who will get better as time passes.

Karzak (Dwarf): Karzak is an excellent fighter but has no equipment when you find him. Make sure to give him some equipment because he is very effective in the stages of the game where you will have him.

Dombur (Dwarf): Dombur is not a very good fighter, but knows much valuable information and will construct the Stoneshooter for you later in the game. Also, he is Farli's brother and must be rescued from the Temple of Throggi.

Skuz (Sharga): Skuz is a coward, a wimp, and fun to listen to. He also has some good advice to give, and actually gets to be a decent fighter after some work on his skills.

Sparkle (Faerie): Sparkle is a decent fighter and casts many healing and protective spells. If you are injured and have Sparkle along, simply wait a short time and she will heal you up to the yellow range on your health indicator (80-100 hp).

Enigma (Elf): Enigma is very knowledgeable and an excellent fighter in both hand-to-hand and magick. Make sure you get him before you leave the Ice Caverns.

Wahooka (Who knows?): Wahooka is sarcastic, annoying, and hurls fireballs with great delight. Make sure you have him with you as long as you can, because he's great to have in combat.

[3.3] Friends

The Dwarves

Dwarven Elder: I forget this guy's name. However, you'll need to talk to him once you get to the Clanhall.

Dwarven Smith: You'll need to help this guy out to get him to repair the broken key to free Vermatrix Goldenhide.

Vermatrix Goldenhide: Ruler of Dragons, Vermatrix is trapped in the second level of the Feeding Grounds. You'll need to repair the very sturdy key to free her from her chains.

The Faeries Sweetie and Surly Winkle, Binkle, Giggle, Chuckle, Snort, and Murph Iaenni, Queen of the Fae

Others

Skrag: Skrag is the leader of the Sharga Freedom League. Make sure you listen to him.

[3.4] Enemies

Khull-Khuum, the Shadowking: He's big, he's bad, and he has an ugly helmet that looks like it came out of a scrap metal shop. Avoid this guy.

Ants Sharga Green Slimes Snakes Ugly Three-Tentacled Things Deadly Flowers Throgs Trolls Skeletons Flying Skulls Undead Warriors Fire Elementals Spinning Spikes

[3.5] Mannish Runes

Firebolt: This hurls a small Firebolt. It's not very powerful, but if you boost it with the doubling rune, potency rune, and area effect rune, it makes a nice double explosion that does decent damage.

Curing: This is a low-power healing rune that only restores health.

Silence: I have never effectively used this rune, however I assume it prevents opponents from casting spells.

Languages: Casting this rune on yourself will allow you to read writing that would otherwise be incomprehensible.

Spoilspell: Use as a counterspell or to grant magic resistance.

Mark Location: You must mark a location with this rune before you can use the Translocate (Homing) rune to go back there. The square you attempt to mark must be empty.

Translocate: This will return you to the square you marked with the Mark Location rune. Note that you can only have one location marked at any one time. If you mark a new location, the old mark will vanish.

Scare: Causes enemies to flee.

Armor: This is a decent protective spell against non-ranged attacks.

Healing: This is a more powerful healing spell that also cures poison and other afflictions.

Wind: Hurls a tornado. Also useful for dusting surfaces. I haven't tried it on the dust in the Tower of Shadows however.

Icebolt: This rune hurls an Icebolt. If you increase the power on this rune it will freeze the enemy into a statue temporarily.

Warmth: Use this rune to thaw an ice statue without angering the person trapped inside. I've only found two ice statues, those of Enigma and Nigel. Nigel will show you where to find Cold Fire.

Rune of Cold: I haven't figured out what this rune does yet. However, the scroll it was on was very cold, so I assume it has something to do with that.

[3.6] Faerie Runes

Featherfall: This rune will prevent the affected person from suffering damage by falling down a pit. Usually not worth the effort of casting.

Shrink: Use this rune on Marif's Orb in the Palace of Shadows to shrink it to a manageable size. I've never tried it on an opponent, but it might work. You get this from a treasure chest past Vermatrix Goldenhide. This is the only rune you really need to complete the game.

Invisibility: This rune will make your entire party invisible. I haven't had much opportunity to try it out but I assume monsters will ignore you.

Murphy's Rune: Murph in the Faerie Realm will give you this rune. I don't know what it does, but it either slows down the target or makes everything go wrong for them, depending on how you interpret the hints.

[3.7] Throggish Runes

Strength: This rune temporarily increases your strength.

Flame: This rune will engulf the square in front of you with a pillar of fire. I haven't found it very useful, but note that the Throg shamans have it too and delight in using it.

Shield: This rune protects you against ranged attacks for a period of time.

Energybolt: This rune damages an opponent, and if increased power is used, it will stun them temporarily.

Stoptrack: Use this rune to paralyze a target, or at least prevent them from approaching you. I haven't tried it out yet.

[3.8] Meta Runes

Potency: This will decrease the target's magic resistance.

Double Power: This will double the power of the spell it is applied to.

Increased Duration: This will increase the duration of the spell it is applied to. I don't know what it would do on an instant spell.

Area Effect: This rune will make a single-target spell affect everything in a square.

[3.9] Normal Items

Healthy Root: Eating one of these will heal you slightly.

Very Healthy Root: Eating one of these will give you a decent dose of healing.
Musty Smelling Root: I've never eaten one of these.
Oil Flasks: Throwing one of these will make a nice explosion. Farli also seems to carry around a secret supply.
Keys and the Keyring: The keyring is in a chest on the second level of Stonekeep. It's a VERY useful item. I have found the following keys so far:
Brass Key
Bronze Key
Steel Key
Ivory Key (2 types)
Iron Key
Throggish Key (2 types)
Very Sturdy Key (2 types)
Lion Key
Eagle Key
I have probably missed one or two keys, so don't take this as a comprehensive list.

Armor and Weapons

There are lots of these. Daggers and throwing axes are very nice weapons, along with the crossbow. I have never used the short bow or either type of arrows so I don't know how effective they are. Arrows and bolts can be thrown in an emergency however.

[3.10] Magickal Items
Blue Vial: This is a weak healing potion.
Blue Potion: This is a healing potion.
Blue Decanter: This is a powerful healing potion.
Light Green Potion: This grants an agility enchantment.
Dark Green Potion: This grants a strength enchantment.
Red Mushroom: This grants both strength and agility enchantments.
Green Mushroom: This cures poison and other conditions.
Spotted Mushroom: Unknown.
Magickal Rings: You can wear up to four rings. I have only found three types of rings, however:
Magick Armor Ring
Ring of Poison Resistance
Luckstone Ring

I usually wear two armor rings and one each of the other types. The only place to get a luckstone ring is from Iaenni.
Mechanomagickal Stoneshooter: The dwarven version of a machine gun, Dombur will assemble this for you once you bring him the three missing parts found in the Feeding Grounds. It's not a very effective weapon, however, it does fire very fast.
Magickal Armor and Weapons: So far I have found a very sharp dagger, a stone weapon from Throggi, and some magickal armor and shields. There's also a sword made of ice and a warhammer which may be magicakal. Magickal throwing axes make excellent weapons. Just before entering the Gate of the Ancients there is a full suit of magickal plate armor and helmet.

[3.11] Runecasters
Runewand: Found in Mage-Icarius' laboratory, this runecaster has 2 slots and holds a maximum of 25 mana points.
Runesceptre: Found in the second level of the Sharga Mines, this runecaster has 3 slots and holds a maximum of 40 mana points.
Throggish Runecaster: Found on Gorda Karn's corpse, this runecaster has 4 slots and holds a maximum of 40 mana points.
Elfstaff: Found in the troll area of the Faerie Realm, this runecaster has 5 slots and holds a maximum of 60 mana points.
Silver Runestaff: Found in a secret room behind the Gate of the Ancients (when the gate is in front of you, turn right, go forward, turn left, go

forward, turn left, go forward, turn right, go forward), this runecaster has
6 slots and holds a maximum of 99 mana points.
[3.12] Special Items
Cylinders: Use the cylinders in the drain switches to open the sliding walls
in the sewers and to drain the sewers. You'll need to find both under the
water in the sewers. Drake will tell you that he has stubbed his toe when
you enter the square with one.
Dragon Statue: You'll need to place the Dragon Statue on a special pedestal
to open the gate to the Underlands. The three-tentacled thing in the sewers
has the statue.
Throggish Pendant: Gorda Karn has the Throggish Pendant. It will allow you
to enter the inner sanctum of the Temple of Throggi.
Four-Leaf Clover: You'll need this to see and attack the trolls in the
Faerie Realm. Without it, you have no chance whatsoever. Sweetie will give
it to you after you free Vermatrix Goldenhide.
Cold Fire: This is hidden behind a weak wall in the Caverns of Ice. You must
throw it at the Ice Queen to have any chance of defeating her.
Silver Light: I don't know if this is an item or something else, however the
Gargoyle at the Tower of Shadows tells you that it will keep the shadows at
bay. I haven't found it yet - enemies in the Tower are very difficult.
[3.13] The Orbs
Khull-Khuum's Orb: I don't know if this one even exists. It probably
doesn't, but it's here for completeness.
Helion's Orb: The Ice Queen has Helion's Orb. I haven't yet figured out it's
function though. It makes cool red sparkles when you drop it on the ground
in front of you, though.
Aquila's Orb: Aquila's Orb is very nice to have. It heals everyone in your
party completely when used. I'm not sure of how often it can be used, or if
it just has a limited number of charges. So far, every time I have used it
it has delivered. I forget where it is found, but it's relatively close to
the beginning.
Thera's Orb: You'll find Thera's Orb at the pinnacle of the Tower of
Shadows, right behind the Shadowking. I haven't yet figured out what it
does, however.
Azrael's Orb: This orb is the red eye in the Statue of Throggi. I haven't
figured out what it does yet, however.
Marif's Orb: Marif's Orb is in the Palace of Shadows. After you place the
Yin-Yang symbol in one of the two slots, a door will open to the hall with
Marif's Orb. You'll need to use the Shrink spell on it to get it down to a
manageable size. Marif's Orb gives you both physical and spiritual strength,
allowing you to pass certain barriers.
Safrinni's Orb: Safrinni's Orb is in the Pits underneath the Gate of the
Ancients. Using its power allows you to rise up through a pit. You'll need
to use it to get to the Gate of the Ancients.
Yoth-Soggoth's Orb: Yoth-Soggoth's Orb is in the Faerie Realm, guarded by a
troll shaman. Using this orb will completely recharge all of your
runecasters. Like Aquila's Orb, I'm not sure of the limitations on its
usage.
Kor-Soggoth's Orb: This orb is right next to the Shadowking along with
Thera's. I haven't yet figured out if it has any powers, but I believe it
grants magical resistance. It will prevent the Shadowking's soul-binding
spells from working on you.
Afri's Orb: Afri's Orb is in the first level of the Ruins of Stonekeep,
right next to the two big Sharga with the steel key. Placing the orb on the
ground in front of you will generate a map of the area around you - very
useful for locating illusionary walls and stuff like that.

[4.0]
                              Spoilers
[4.1] Entrance to Stonekeep

Fountains of Thera: None. Mana Circles: None. Exits to other areas: Two stairways to the first level.
You start the game here. Poke around and make sure to pick up the weapons and armor in the chest before descending to the first level.

[4.2] First Level of Ruins of Stonekeep
Fountains of Thera: None.
Mana Circles: None.
Exits to other areas: Two stairways to the entrance. Two stairways to the second level.
There are two very difficult sharga near the end of this level. The only way to defeat them is to throw the oil flasks at them. Make sure you save your game first in case you miss. If they are still alive after the firebombing, throw daggers at them.

[4.3] Second Level of Ruins of Stonekeep
Fountains of Thera: One, along the eastern edge towards the south.
Mana Circles: One, in the southwest.
Exits to other areas: Two stairways to the first level. Three stairways to the sewers. One stairway to the Sharga Mines.
There are three illusionary walls on this level. In addition, you'll find Farli in a cell in the southern portion of this level, next to the room where you find the ivory key. Get him with you as soon as possible, because he makes a BIG difference. Also, Wahooka shows up for the first time here. Don't get him irked at you, since you'll need his help later in the game.

[4.4] Sewers Beneath Stonekeep
Fountains of Thera: None.
Mana Circles: One, in the southwest corner.
Exits to other areas: Three stairways to the second level.
Wahooka will show up on this level, and ask you to find him the heads of three men long dead. Give him three skulls when he asks you for the heads, and in return he will give you a triangle key which you will need later. You cannot defeat the three-tentacled beast until you have drained the sewers.

[4.5] First Level of Sharga Mines
Fountains of Thera: None.
Mana Circles: None.
Exits to other areas: One stairway to Stonekeep. One stairway to the second level.
Make sure to rescue Karzak here. He's an excellent warrior and makes some helpful comments.

[4.6] Second Level of Sharga Mines
Fountains of Thera: None.
Mana Circles: None.
Exits to other areas: One stairway to the first level. One stairway to the Temple Entrance.
To get the Ettin's key, you'll need to throw rocks to break the barrels from outside the room, then sneak past the Ettin and loot the chest. Don't enter the Ettin's square or throw anything at him, or you'll regret it.

[4.7] Entrance to the Temple of Throggi
Fountains of Thera: None.
Mana Circles: One, in the northwest.
Exits to other areas: One stairway to the Sharga Mines. One stairway to the Temple of Throggi.
When you reach the door that asks for a password, keep attempting to go in. The third time's the charm. Once inside, don't attack any of the Sharga - they're friendly.

[4.8] Temple of Throggi
Fountains of Thera: None.
Mana Circles: None.

Exits to other areas: One stairway to the Temple Entrance. One stairway to the Feeding Grounds.
You'll need to kill Gorda Karn to get the Throggish Pendant and then enter the inner sanctum to get to the Statue of Throggi. Make sure you rescue Dombur before you enter the inner sanctum. Once you reach the statue (there are five guards to kill), take the RED eye and ONE of the weapons. Any more and the statue will kill you.

[4.9] First Level of Feeding Grounds
Fountains of Thera: None.
Mana Circles: One, in the north.
Exits to other areas: One stairway to the Temple of Throggi. Three stairways to the second level. One stairway to the Dwarven Clanhall.
Find one half of the key to free Vermatrix Goldenhide here.
You'll need feathers from a Throg Shaman to pass by the runes without injury. There's a Throg Shaman behind one rune in the south. Heal up before and after going through.

[4.10] Second Level of Feeding Grounds
Fountains of Thera: None.
Mana Circles: Two, one in the west and one in the southwest.
Exits to other areas: Three stairways to the first level. One stairway to the Ice Caverns. One magical gate to the Faerie Realm.
The other half of the key to free Vermatrix Goldenhide is in a chest to the north of this level. Magickal flint is to the west of Vermatrix, but you'll need the magickal chisel to get it. The smith in the dwarven clanhall can repair the key for you.

[4.11] Dwarven Clanhall
Fountains of Thera: One, in the east.
Mana Circles: None.
Exits to other areas: One stairway to the Feeding Grounds.
You'll need to make several trips to the Fountain of Thera to kill the undead warrior. Once you kill him you can take the stuff from the chest that the dwarven elder has.
The dwarves will leave you once you enter, however, Karzak will join up with you again. Farli won't return until the Palace of Shadows.

[4.12] Faerie Realm
Fountains of Thera: None.
Mana Circles: None.
Exits to other areas: One magical gate to the Feeding Grounds.
You'll need a lot of patience and forbearance to get through the Faerie Realm. The faeries can be *TOTALLY* annoying. Make sure to note where every Faerie is so you can return to them with the objects they want.
You'll need to put on a faerie hat to get through the invisible barrier to Iaenni. I don't know if there is anything else you need to do. You can talk to her three times, once after giving her the picture and once after leaving and fooling with the big brown thing just south of her. Be warned that her speech isn't captioned, so you'll need to listen carefully. I'll put a transcript here if someone supplies one for me.

[4.13] Caverns of Ice
Fountains of Thera: None, however there is a one-use fountain of healing and a Sharga healer who will sometimes heal you.
Mana Circles: None.
Exits to other areas: One stairway to the Feeding Grounds. One stairway to the Gate of the Ancients.
Find the runescroll off to the south and bring it back to the Sharga shaman for the warming rune among others (she will give you four runes total). Use the warming rune to free Enigma and Nigel.

[4.14] Gate of the Ancients
Fountains of Thera: None.
Mana Circles: One, in a secret room behind the Gate of the Ancients.
Exits to other areas: One stairway to the Ice Caverns. A bunch of pits to

the Pits. The Gate of the Ancients to the Palace of Shadows.
This level is eerily empty and full of all kinds of nasty traps. Be careful.
You'll need to go up and down a lot to finish it. Search every wall for
buttons and illusions.
There's an awesome cinematic when you go through the Gate of the Ancients.
Be ready. And save your game before you go in, since it's a one way trip.
[4.15] The Pits
Fountains of Thera: None.
Mana Circles: One, near where you find Safrinni's Orb.
Exits to other areas: A bunch of ladders to the Gate of the Ancients.
You'll need to fall down a pit onto a pressure plate to open the passageway
to Safrinni's Orb. Simply walking over it won't trigger the wall to open.
Once you find the orb, use it to rise out of the pit in the room you are in.
You'll need to find both the Lion Key and the Eagle Key to finish this
level. One of the keys is in a fire, so you'll need to burn yourself to get
it out.
[4.16] Palace of Shadows
Fountains of Thera: None.
Mana Circles: None.
Exits to other areas: One magical gate to the Tower of Shadows.
This place is eerie and nasty. Once you enter, there's no going back. Make
sure you have SIX orbs before you enter the Gate of the Ancients. The Palace
is a mirror image, with the east half being a reflection of the west half.
Stuff in the east half is weird and illusionary, and sometimes very
difficult to see. Going west is much safer. You'll need to work your way
around to get both halves of the yin-yang symbol, then place them in one of
the two holders. Mark the location, go through the door, shrink Marif'he
Orb, pick it up, and return back to your marked location. Then seek out the
place on the west half where Scourge is (three floating skulls with colored
light coming out of their eyes), run past, and go through the black mirror
to get to the mirror image of that place. If you've been looking carefully
at your map, you'll notice that the reflection doesnt match in this one
particular place. Hurl a fireball at the back of the alcove to open a door
to the Tower of Shadows.
Farli is off to the left after you pass the location where Marif'he Orb is.
Make sure to get him to join you before you translocate.
[4.17] First Level of Tower of Shadows
Fountains of Thera: None.
Mana Circles: None.
Exits to other areas: One magical gate to the Palace of Shadows. One
stairway to the second level. One stairway to the Lair of the Dark Dwarves.
When you reach the door and the gargoyle asks you if you want to enter,
press the red square (no). Then when it asks you if you need to enter, press
the green triangle (yes). It will give you some advice.
Listen to Enigma when he tells you to stop. He knows what he'he doing.
[4.18] Unknown (Temple of Thera?)
Fountains of Thera: None.
Mana Circles: None.
Exits to other areas: None.
[4.19] Second Level of Tower of Shadows
Fountains of Thera: None.
Mana Circles: None.
Exits to other areas: One stairway to the first level. One stairway to the
third level.
[4.20] Third Level of Tower of Shadows
Fountains of Thera: None.
Mana Circles: None.
Exits to other areas: One stairway to the fourth level. One stairway to the
second level.
[4.21] Fourth Level of Tower of Shadows

Fountains of Thera: None.
Mana Circles: None.
Exits to other areas: One stairway to the third level.
Khull-Khuum is on this level, with the final two orbs. I managed to grab both and run fast enough to get away from him before he killed me, however, I have no idea what to do next.
[4.22] Lair of the Dark Dwarves
Fountains of Thera: None.
Mana Circles: One, in the north.
Exits to other areas: One stairway to the Tower of Shadows.
There's an odd device here that I can't figure out and a wall with a passage behind it that I can't open. Once I figure these out I'll write them down here.

[5.0]
                              Other Stuff
[5.1] Notes
This version of the STONEKEEP FAQ is highly preliminary, and I am writing it mostly from memory. I have also not yet completed the game, so some of the maps are not filled in. I can't remember all of the mana circles offhand either, so several are probably missing from the lists.
[5.2] Credits
Nobody has contributed so far. If you have a correction or something you'd like to add, please email me at dswarin@cs.oberlin.edu and I'll update the FAQ.
I'd like to thank my cat, Fred, for attacking the keyboard while I was writing this FAQ, and if there are any typos, it's his fault.
[5.3] Copyright
This FAQ is copyright 1995 by Doug Swarin. It may be freely distributed in whole or in part so long as it remains unmodified. You may freely modify it, but if you do, you must place a notice on the FAQ that states you have changed it and what parts you have changed. If you remove this copyright notice from the FAQ, you are wholly responsible for what is contained within. However, in no case will I, Interplay Productions, or my cat be liable for anything in here.
[5.4] Secret Surprise Not-In-Index Big Thank You
I'd like to thank Chris Taylor and everyone at Interplay for making a great game. Thanks guys!

SoftRAM in Trouble? STR Spotlight

                              SoftRAM 95
In response to several messages that have been posted on different on-line services we would like to make the following statement. Syncronys SoftCorp has already on October 20, 1995 made a press release, announcing that it has discovered bugs in the Windows 95 version of SoftRAM 95. Accordingly, Syncronys will make an absolutely free upgrade available to all users. Registered users will receive the free upgrade in the mail automatically, shipping and handling charges will not be billed.
The patch will also be made available through all on-line services, including the Internet. Although the product has also received excellent reviews in several publications, Syncronys is concerned that it supply only the best products to its customers. Accordingly all product on the retailers' shelves across the country is currently being labeled as 3.1 and 3.11 product only. The company has identified the problem and the patch will be made widely available in the beginning of December.
Since SoftRAM 95 contains both versions, the Windows 3.1 and Windows 95 version, customers who are purchasing the Windows 3.1 version of SoftRAM are

receiving the full benefit of our superior RAM compression technology. A test, conducted on the Windows 3.1 and 3.11 version of SoftRAM 95 by XXCAL, Inc. Testing Laboratories, one of the largest testing labs in the world, has just come to the following conclusion:

Test Summary

XXCAL performed Win 1 6 Benchmark testing on various systems utilizing Syncronys Softcorp's SoftRAM95 as specified in the XXCAL's proposal 9510015-2.O dated Octoberll,1995. Testing was completed on October 29,1995.

Test Results

Under the Windows 3.1 and 3.11 environments, Syncronys Softcorp's SoftRAM 95 (v2.001) increases RAM dramatically. The results show that SoftRAM 95 effectively doubles system RAM (i.e. from 8MB to 16MB) in a manner that is equivalent to adding more physical RAM. The tests show that SoftRAM 95 enables Windows to run faster, to run more and larger applications concurrently and to load larger data files. Various Windows applications were utilized to perform this benchmark (listed below). For details, please see XXCAL's final report.

I hope that this information is useful in setting the record straight. Syncronys is in development with several new products and we will keep you updated. We are currently also setting up a WEB site, we will give you the address as soon as it is functional. We are looking forward to your feedback.

Regards

Rainer Poertner

CEO

SYNCRONYS REPORTS TESTS CONFIRMSOFTRAM95 DOUBLES RAM

CULVER CITY, Calif. -- Syncronys Softcorp (OTC: SYCR) today announced the results of a commissioned evaluation of the company's SoftRAM95 product which confirms that the company's best-selling product SoftRAM95 effective ly doubles Random Access Memory (RAM).

The study was conducted by XXCAL, Inc. Testing Laboratories of Los Angeles, CA, an independent software testing company. Win16 Benchmark Testing was conducted on a variety of systems using Syncronys' SoftRAM95 under Windows 3.1 and 3.11 environments. XXCAL is a world leader in compatibility, certification and functionality testing for software products. A copy of the full report is available on request from the company.

The results were summarized by XXCAL as follows:"Under the Windows 3.1 and 3.11 environments, Syncronys Softcorp's SoftRAM95 (v2.001) increases RAM dramatically. The results show that SoftRAM95 effectively doubles system RAM (i.e. from 8MB to 16MB) in a manner that is equivalent to adding more physical RAM. The tests show that SoftRAM95 enables Windows to run faster, to run more and larger applications concurrently and to load larger data files. Various Windows applications were utilized to perform this benchmark."

The Windows applications utilized to perform the benchmark include:CorelDRAW 5.0, Drafix 3.0, Excel 5.0, MS Office 4.2, Pagemaker 5.0 and Word 6.0. President and CEO Rainer Poertner said, "these positive results from XXCAL demonstrate clearly that our core technology delivers a substantial and measurable benefit to our users running Windows 3.1. These users are by far our largest target market. We are confident that the Windows95 upgrade version will deliver equally impressive performance once it is released."Work on the upgrade to SoftRAM95 for Windows95 continues on schedule. XXCAL will be commissioned to evaluate the upgrade once it is available. The company, as announced previously, will automatically distribute the upgrade version free to all registered users.

In addition, the company announced that a leading PC publication in France has also achieved positive product test results. "We are pleased to announce that SoftRAM95 has been chosen by our editorial staff as one of the best products of the month. It has been labeled Editor's Choice," stated

Michel Barreau, Managing Editor of PC Mag."We give this distinction to software or hardware products tested which impressed us with at least two of the three following features: quality, technical characteristics and price." For the second consecutive time, SoftRAM was ranked number one on PC Magazine's Top Retail Software chart. The listing appeared in the November 7th and November 27th issues of PC Magazine. In its most recent issue, SoftRAM's shipment volume ranks ahead of Windows95 and Netscape. The November lists, compiled by Ingram Micro, rank PC business programs according to the total number of copies shipped to over 12,000 stores and resellers in the weeks ending September 9 and September 16. Since its release in May 1995, Syncronys has generated sales of more than 650,000 units of SoftRAM.

SoftRAM95 is an innovative software product that effectively doubles the amount of memory available to Windows applications. Unique among memory products, SoftRAM95 uses proprietary compression technology that actually enhances physical RAM. SoftRAM95 works with any 386, 486, or Pentium PC, desktop or notepad and offers additional features over the best-selling original version of SoftRAM.

Headquartered in Culver City, California, Syncronys Softcorp is a leader in the business of providing memory-enhancement and other performance-improving software for PCs. Syncronys' diversified complement of software products are sold through distribution channels worldwide.smithpr@ix.netcom.com (Steven Smith)November 9, 1995COMDEX Booth #S7721Contact: Diana Soltesz / Steve Smith   Smith Public Relations   (310) 788-0456

Subject: Egghead pulls SoftRAM95! - Msg Number: 12812From: Richard Smith 75070,2253To: AllForum: WINUTI Sec: 01-WINUTIL AdvisorDate: 05-Nov-95 19:05:42

Hot news flash:Egghead Software has pulled SoftRAM95 from the shelves because there are too many questions if the product works as advertised. Egghead will not be carrying the product again until there is a version that is proven to work under Windows 95.
Richard
The following is a captured post from one of the recent threads in a few of the more popular Internet Newsgroups in regards to the SoftRAM issues.
Re: SoftRam on PC Magazine!From: it@ct.ix.de (Ingo T. Storm)Date: 1995/11/07MessageID: DHp3us.Ixx@ix.de#2/3

On Thursday, Syncronys President Rainer Poertner said all unsold packages of SoftRAM95 will be relabeled with a sticker indicating the product is intended only for use with the Windows 3.1 operating system. The label will cover text on the box claiming the product works with the new Windows 95 operating system.

SoftRAM95 is a memory-doubler, a program intended to trick a PC into thinking it has twice as much random-access memory, or RAM, the chips the processor uses to store information while it is working. Windows 95 requires large amounts of RAM and many users have been reluctant to spend the $150 to $200 required to boost their machines from the four megabytes of RAM common in older PCs to the eight megabytes recommended for Windows 95, the new highly popular operating system from Microsoft.

Poertner said Syncronys has shipped 650,000 copies of SoftRAM95, which has been advertised as working for either Windows 95 or Windows 3.1.

Complaints have emerged in recent weeks, however, that SoftRAM95 has no effect whatsoever in improving the performance of Windows 95.

Connectix Corp. of San Mateo, which makes a competing product called "RAM Doubler," hired an independent consultant in September to evaluate SoftRAM95.

The report from the National Software Testing Laboratories concluded: "In the Windows 95 environment, SoftRAM95 offers no significant performance improvement. By comparison, adding more RAM to a typical Windows 95 system

provides a dramatic improvement to the average response time."

The laboratory ran a test with several word-processing tasks that took 173 seconds to perform on a PC equipped with a 75 megahertz Pentium processor and eight megabytes of RAM. Adding SoftRAM95, the lab said, actually slowed the computer down slightly, with the tasks requiring 178 seconds. When the lab added chips to double the memory to 16 megabytes of RAM, the task time was cut to 72 seconds.

Last month, the German publication "Magazin fur Computer Technik" ran an article titled "Software Placebo?" arguing that SoftRAM95 did nothing to improve performance in either Windows 3.1 or Windows 95. Syncronys is now taking legal action in Germany against the magazine.

The company acknowledged a problem, however, in an Oct. 20 news release. While defending SoftRAM95's performance in Windows 3.1, the news release said "a problem exists with the Windows 95 version, the net result of which is that RAM compression is not being delivered to the operating system." In other words, there is no RAM-doubling in Windows 95.

On Thursday, Poertner said the news release inadvertently omitted the words "on a consistent basis" from the end of the sentence. SoftRAM95 contains a bug that sometimes prevents the program from delivering any performance improvement in Windows 95, he said, but the program does work some of the time.

Nonetheless, Poertner said Syncronys will stop claiming SoftRAM95 works with Windows 95 until a revised version is ready next month. The new program will be sent free to all registered users of SoftRAM95, and will be available at no charge for downloading on the Internet and through major commercial on-line services.

"We're a very honorable company," Poertner declared. "The hands-on approach we're taking to solving this is very much appreciated by everyone out there."

Investors in Syncronys stock may not be among those applauding, however. The company's shares have tumbled from a peak of $31.75 on Aug. 17 to less than $10, closing Thursday at $8.13 a share.

Syncronys is also working to resolve a problem with Microsoft Corp., the creator of Windows 95. Deborah Celis, a Windows 95 product manager at Microsoft headquarters in Redmond, Wash., said Syncronys was using the Windows 95 logo on the SoftRAM95 box without authorization.

Subject: SoftRAM 95 Scam - Msg Number: 12815From: Jim Leeber/WUGNET 74641,3255To: AllForum: WINUTI Sec: 01-WINUTIL AdvisorDate: 05-Nov-95 19:48:14

Syncronsys has announced that they are taking off the Windows 95 Compatible Logo from all SoftRam95 packages, after publicly admitting, that their current shrink wrapped version of SoftRam95 absolutely provides no benefits in memory enhancement under Windows 95.

The new packaging, according to press reports, is supposed to hit store shelves next week, but the reseller channel inventory is filled with gazillons of the mislabeled software. No word on what this means to existing SoftRam95 buyers.

The scam is over folks!

This is a report by the Windows Users Group Network online organization, operators of the WinUtil, WinCon, WinETA, WinUTIL, WinGames, WinUTA, WinUser, WinClips, WinBIZ, NTWORK, NTSERVER forums and the GO WIN95 Support Center on CompuServe. Founded in 1988, WUGNET continues to be the largest online user group organization, promoting the free exchange of technical support information, product news for the benefit of the Microsoft Windows 3.X, Windows 95 and Windows NT User.

By Mike Langberg, San Jose Mercury News, Calif. Knight-Ridder/Tribune Business NewsSAN JOSE, Calif.--Nov. 3--"SoftRAM95," currently topping the best-seller lists for personal computer software because it's supposed to improve a computer's performance, is seriously flawed and is being repackaged by its publisher, Syncronys Softcorp of Culver City.

EDUPAGE STR Focus   Keeping the users informed
Edupage, 23 Nov 95. Edupage, a summary of news items on information
technology, is provided three times each week as a service by Educom, a
Washington, D.C.-based consortium of leading colleges and universities
seeking to transform education through the use of information technology.

TOP STORIES
AOL Strains To Support Growing
Customer Load
Windows 95 Penetration At 6%
IS Managers Prime For Job-Hopping
More Computers = More Police
Protection
        Bell Dials Wrong Number
        Emerging Markets For PCs
        E(verybody)-Mail

ALSO
The Wages Of Synergy
Company Fined For Misleading
Internet Ad
Corel Pursues Internet
Sprint vs Unitel And AT&T
Electronic Filing And Tax Cheats
Federal Regulator's Policies
Challenged
Broadcast Ownership Rules Changed
Internet In Africa
This Is The Web -- It's Not A
Reading Room
Gates On The Future

                AOL STRAINS TO SUPPORT GROWING CUSTOMER LOAD
    With subscribership growing at an astonishing 300,000 a month, America
Online is struggling to keep up with technical and customer support.   The
system has suffered a couple of outages since September, and the churn rate
is a substantial 29%. Even with revenues of almost $400 million this year,
the company isn't expected to be cash-flow positive until the fourth quarter
of 1996. To remedy the situation, AOL is installing a new nationwide high-
speed network, called AOLNet, and is diversifying its revenue sources,
selling daytime network services to businesses such as Federal Express and
generating income through advertising and product sales. "They're growing
like crazy and broadening their revenue mix," says one market researcher.
"But the real question is, can they keep it up?" (Business Week 27 Nov 95
p119)   Meanwhile, AOL and Bertelsmann AG will work together with Deutsche
Telekom's online subsidiary to jointly market online services in Germany.
The group has banded together to combat a perceived threat from the
Microsoft Network in the European online market. (Wall Street Journal 22
Nov 95 B8)
                    WINDOWS 95 PENETRATION AT 6%
    A survey of 1,201 households by market research firm Odyssey shows that
Windows 95 is running computers in 6% of PC households. But while 92% of
respondents had heard of Windows 95, only 10% said it was likely they'd be
buying the new program -- 53% said it was extremely unlikely they'd be
switching from their current operating system. The survey also found that
22% of Windows 95 households had signed up for Microsoft Network.
(Investor's Business Daily 22 Nov 95 A7)
                    IS MANAGERS PRIME FOR JOB-HOPPING

The growing demand for information systems managers combined with an
upbeat economy is creating a seller's market when it comes to IS skills, and
management specialists are predicting widespread job-hopping in the next
year or two: "During the last three years, while the economy was turbulent,
people stayed at jobs they disliked because there was downsizing all around
them and fewer jobs.   Now, as the economy is heating up, there'll be
unprecedented turnover." (Information Week 20 Nov 95 p208)

MORE COMPUTERS = MORE POLICE PROTECTION

A group of business and community leaders has raised $15 million to buy
more computers for the Los Angeles Police Department in an effort to enable
officers to spend more time on the beat and less time filling out forms.
Currently, 41% of a police officer's time is spent on paperwork.   The new
systems are expected to save the department 150,000 work days a year - the
equivalent of 576 full-time cops. (Investor's Business Daily 22 Nov 95 A6)

BELL DIALS WRONG NUMBER

For the second time in a year, Bell Canada backed down in the face of
fierce vocal opposition to increasing phone rates -- this time for Internet
users. Bell has asked federal regulators to create a special new tariff for
Internet service providers, and will meet with ISPs and a mediator to reach
an acceptable tariff schedule. (Montreal Gazette 22 Nov 95 F1) Bell noted
the exploding popularity of the Internet, where computer users can jam lines
for hours, has already caused problems in two British Columbia neighborhoods
where callers were unable to get through to 911. In Metro-Toronto alone,
Bell will spend an additional $31-million to upgrade its network because of
higher computer use. (Toronto Star 23 Nov 95 A1/A3)

EMERGING MARKETS FOR PCs

A Dataquest report indicates that between 1992 and 1994 PC sales rose
44% in the U.S. (to $37 billion), contrasted with a more modest 22% in
Europe and a dramatic 83% in emerging markets. China and South Korea are
each now buying more than a million PCs a year, and Brazil, India, Thailand,
Malaysia and Indonesia will soon follow their example. (Forbes 4 Dec 95
p256)

E(VERYBODY)-MAIL

Noting the important social, economic and political benefits of
electronic mail, a Rand Corporation study says that e-mail access should be
extended to all Americans and that public funding should be provided to help
people who could not otherwise afford electronic mail service.   The study
estimates it would cost about $1 billion to provide e-mail to 10% of all
Americans. (Atlanta Journal-Constitution 22 Nov 95 B2)

THE WAGES OF SYNERGY

Ken Auletta, who writes "Annals of Communications" for the New Yorker
magazine, is leery of the impact on journalism of so-called "synergistic"
mergers and alliances within the information industry.   "The new
megacorporations value 'teamwork.' They use 'leverage' to boost sales.
They dream of a 'borderless' company that eliminates defensive interior
barriers.   But ... the leverage that journalists are interested in is the
kind that pries loose the story, not the kind that boosts the parent
company's other 'products.'" (New Yorker 27 Nov 95 p8)

COMPANY FINED FOR MISLEADING INTERNET AD

Virgin Atlantic Airways in the U.K. has been fined $14,000 by the U.S.
Department of Transportation for placing a "misleading" fare ad on the
Internet, which is the first time the DOT has fined an airline for
information posted on the Net. (Atlanta Journal-Constitution 22 Nov 95 B2)

COREL PURSUES INTERNET

At an Internet conference in Ottawa, Corel president Michael Cowpland
outlined his company's plans for market expansion through Internet products.
Next month, Corel will launch "Internet Mania," a package of utilities that
lets an unattended computer look for news, e-mail and other Internet-based
information. (Ottawa Sun 23 Nov 95 p54)

SPRINT VS UNITEL AND AT&T

Call-Net, owners of Sprint Canada, told federal regulators the growth in foreign ownership of Canadian long-distance provider Unitel by AT&T is illegal and should be overturned. AT&T and Unitel called Sprint's allegations a publicity stunt aimed at grabbing customers. (Toronto Star 22 Nov 95 C2)

ELECTRONIC FILING AND TAX CHEATS

Canada's Auditor General blames Revenue Canada's electronic tax filing system for making it easier to cheat the system. The AG's report notes electronic filers are not required to provide supporting documents for amounts claimed unless asked to do so. (Ottawa Citizen 22 Nov 95 A1)

FEDERAL REGULATOR'S POLICIES CHALLENGED

Two ambitious deals underway in Canada in the TV industry directly challenge the CRTC's opposition to broadcasters owning more than one TV station in each market. Officials at the regulatory office say the CRTC is not likely to soften its stance despite the pending deals involving CanWest Global's bid for WIC Western International Broadcasting and CFCF's asset swap with Groupe Videotron. (Toronto Financial Post 22 Nov 95 p2) Quebec-based Cogeco Cable says it will seek a court order to force CFCF to put its proposed multi-million dollar asset swap with Groupe Videotron to a shareholders' vote. Cogeco says it remains interested in taking over CFCF. (Toronto Globe & Mail 23 Nov 95 B5)

BROADCAST OWNERSHIP RULES CHANGED

Canada's Cabinet approved a plan to increase foreign ownership limits allowed in the broadcast and cable industries to 33.3% from the current 20% at the holding company level. At the same time, foreign investors will be allowed to own up to 20% of a Canadian broadcast licensee. Heritage Minister Michel Dupuy says the changes will allow more access by Canadian companies to foreign capital and improve Canada's competitive position in info-highway development. Federal regulators will also be given broader powers to prevent foreign corporations from gaining effective control over broadcast licenses. (Toronto Financial Post 23 Nov 95 p3)

INTERNET IN AFRICA

Ghana is the fourth sub-Saharan African nation to go online, after South Africa, Botswana and Zambia. These four now have full Internet access, and Accra, Ghana's capital, is evolving as the Internet hub for west Africa. Accra's only full-service network provider, Network Computer Systems, has 140 subscribers and will break even when it reaches 200. (Financial Times 20 Nov 95 p11)

THIS IS THE WEB -- IT'S NOT A READING ROOM

David Shenk, a fellow at Columbia University's Freedom Forum Media Studies Center, says that "the very attributes that make the Web such a sensation also limit its potential as a thoroughly thoughtful medium -- not because it can't exhibit serious ideas, but because it conveys so many of them so quickly, without the necessary built-in pauses for deliberation and without contextual structures. One does not read on the Web; one surfs. This is the nature of the beast... As a research tool, the web is indeed a prime new asset. As a source of contemplation, reasoned discourse and dialogue, however, it is found wanting." (Washington Post 12 Nov 95 C5)

GATES ON THE FUTURE

In the future predicted in his new book, "The Road Ahead," Microsoft's Bill Gates says that information technology will not replace teachers ("I can say emphatically and unequivocally, IT WON'T.") and will not replace traditional story telling in which the reader can NOT influence the outcome. The stories he selects as examples? "I don't want to choose an ending for 'The Great Gatsby' or 'La Dolce Vita.' F. Scott Fitzgerald and Federico Fellini have done that for me." (Newsweek 27 Nov 95 p59)

The next issue of Edupage will be 28 Nov 95.

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chime; or a glockenspiel. Your choice. But ring it!

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INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE
The CAUSE organization's annual conference on information technology in
higher education is scheduled for the end of this month in New Orleans. The
conference will bring together administrators, academicians and other
managers of information resources. For full conference information check
out <http://cause-www.colorado.edu > or send e-mail to
conf@cause.colorado.edu.

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A T T E N T I O N-A T T E N T I O N-A T T E N T I O N

Apple/Mac Section
John Deegan, Editor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ACTIVISION RELEASES
SHANGHAI: GREAT MOMENTS FOR MACINTOSH

Popular Shanghai Title Features New Multimedia Twists
and Hollywood Live-Action Emcee

Los Angeles - Shanghai: Great Moments, the latest multimedia edition of Activision, Inc.'s (NASDAQ: ATVI) popular Shanghai strategy-game series, is now available for Macintosh computers.

Building on the well-established Shanghai franchise, Shanghai: Great Moments features a variety of digitized video clips, computer-generated images, compelling music, and actress Rosalind Chao as a live-action emcee. This latest version also includes three all-new games - Action Shanghai, Beijing and The Great Wall - in addition to Classic Shanghai. Motion picture and television clips, colorful animations, and digitized music create lively reward screens when players match intricate pairs of tiles. After a game is successfully completed, the background screen or a video segment related to the particular tile set being played comes to life.

Nine different tile categories - Space Exploration, Art, Inventions, Science Fiction, Music, Famous People, Romance, Momentous Events and Mah-Jongg - provide a variety of entertainment and broad consumer appeal. For example, in the Inventions tile set, a successful match of Thomas Edison will result in a reward video of Edison working in his laboratory; in the Famous People tile set, a match of Martin Luther King tiles prompts a video clip of King's "I have a dream" speech; and in Momentous Events, the demise of the Hindenberg airship is shown upon matching Hindenberg tiles.

Actress Rosalind Chao, best known for her roles in The Joy Luck Club, Star Trek: The Next Generation, 1000 Pieces of Gold, M*A*S*H (the TV series), and the new remake of An Affair To Remember, serves as an emcee through live-action video appearances. Throughout the game Chao offers clever, often tongue-in-cheek comments and gameplay hints in response to players' moves.

The internationally-popular Shanghai titles, which are easy to learn but difficult to master, are mesmerizing for game enthusiasts of all ages. The new tile games in Shanghai: Great Moments - The Great Wall, Beijing and Action Shanghai - offers Macintosh fans an exciting challenge.

In The Great Wall, the tiles which appear at the top of the screen fall when lower tiles are removed; Beijing is played by sliding tiles and matching pairs; Action Shanghai is a race against the clock as the computer adds tiles while players try to clear the display. Tournament Mode, offers the opportunity to play a series of each of the games, thereby allowing players to visually "travel" along the Great Wall of China from one end to the

other.

Shanghai: Great Moments was first introduced in March 1995 on CD-ROM for
Windows 3.1. Original versions of Shanghai and Shanghai II: Dragon's Eye
are available on more than 30 hardware platforms worldwide. The Super
Nintendo version was selected as one of only ten titles featured on the
inaugural Nintendo Gateway System for in-flight, cruise ship and hotel room
entertainment. Shanghai: Triple Threat shipped for the 3DO system in
December 1994.

                    ACTIVISION BLASTS BACK ON THE MAC
                WITH RELEASE OF THE ATARI 2600 ACTION PACK 2

                    Second Title in a Four-Volume Series Features
                    Hit Video Games from the 1980's on Macintosh

Building on the popularity of the Atari 2600 franchise, Activision, Inc.
(NASDAQ: ATVI) has introduced the Atari 2600 Action Pack 2 for Macintosh,
the second title in a planned four-volume series that allows game fans an
opportunity to re-play their favorite Atari games on the computer. The
compilation will feature such classic games as Barnstorming, Megamania and
Keystone Kapers.

"The Atari 2600 Action Pack series introduces new game players to the hit
video titles which revolutionized the gaming industry," explains Bobby
Kotick, Chairman and CEO, Activision. "A classic mix of game genres, the
Action Pack 2 titles are as entertaining today as they were when they were
first introduced."

Featuring 15 best-selling titles on one CD-ROM, the Atari 2600 Action Pack 2
provides game fans the nostalgic appeal of the Atari games. The compilation
offers such diverse titles as Barnstorming, in which a player must use
navigational skills to pilot a biplane around an obstacle course at record
speeds; Megamania, in which a player commands a lone spacecraft through
alien territory in a mission to destroy the enemy; and Keystone Kapers,
which follows the exploits of Keystone Kelly, a do-good cop who must
maneuver through a dangerous maze in hot pursuit of Harry Hooligan.
Additional titles include, Laser Blast, Enduro, Ice Hockey, Atlantis,
Dolphin, Dragster, Oink!, Plaque Attack, River Raid II, Skiing, Stampede and
Tennis.

Activision, Inc. is a publicly held developer and publisher of interactive
entertainment software for Microsoftr Windows and MS-DOSr-compatible,
Macintosh and other computers, as well as Nintendo, Sega, 3DO, and Sony
PlayStation game systems. Headquartered in Los Angeles with offices in
London, Tokyo and Sydney, the company sells and markets products under the
Activision and Infocom trade names.

                              #   #   #

Portable Computers & Entertainment Section
Marty Mankins, Editor

EDITOR'S NOTES - November, 1995

     Getting ready for Comdex is not easy. You must start months before if
you plan to get any kind of hotel room without mortgaging your house. As a
member of the press, you need to make sure you have all of your meetings
scheduled at least a month in advance. All of the press conferences are
mentioned to you via mail before the show, so you need to make sure to leave
time for the press events that you are NOT aware of once you get to the
show.
     Then comes the show where you get to push and force-mingle with over
180,000 people on the first few days. This show is so busy and gets more
packed every year that I keep telling myself that "next year, I won't go."
But here it is next year and I'm going again. I've only missed one year
since 1985 (that was in 1991 when my daughter was born - my wife said she
would kill me if I went! I obeyed well!) and it's been really interesting
each year. All sorts of new products come out and the bigger (Windows and
CD-ROMs) get even bigger (Windows 95 and Magneto Optical storage).
     This year, I am sure portable computing will have yet another surge
with all sorts of new laptops with CD-ROM drives, more memory, loaded with
Windows 95 software and bigger and clearer screens. In fact, IBM is showing
off their new ThinkPad with a 12-inch screen! Although if seemed that the
10-inch LCD screens were big for a laptop, the 12-inch models will be even
easier on the eyes and offer more real estate for your programs. And on the
PDA front, Apple is expected to announce the next version of it's operating
system for the Newton platform. Having had a sneak peek at it, I can say it
looks good and the changes are welcome. Can't say much more than that now.
(sorry)
     Getting back to laptops, our coverage this week is all on portable
computing. Our first article is on the new Laptop forum on CompuServe.
This new forum is exciting and something that will grow to a huge status
over the coming months. Vendors of laptops are signing up in quantity to be
in this new forum. Some laptop vendors will remain in their own forums like
Toshiba and Compaq, but the other vendors are up and coming and will offer a
lot of support for their users.
     The other article is on budget laptops and what to use them for. I get
a lot of questions from students, business people, writers and others on
what kind of cheap laptops are available. It seems that over the course of
time, laptops have become obsolete as newer and faster models come onto the
market, making the older models not so desirable. But, that doesn't mean
that older models still don't have a place in some people's lives. So,
we'll be covering this in depth.
     Next issue (in two weeks), we'll be bringing back the Sony PlayStation
coverage with several game reviews. We were supposed to have at least 2
this time, but I hadn't received them at the deadline, so we'll have to bump
them until next week.

As always, if there are any questions or comments or suggestions, feel free
to e-mail me at 75300.1770@compuserve.com.

-- Marty --

[Personal Info on Marty: owner of InfoStream, a company dedicated to

providing information to the mainstream. Editor of Portability!, a magazine covering the portable consumer electronic industry. Visit out home page at: http://www.info-stream.com]

PORTABLE COMPUTING: Laptop/Notebook

CompuServe's new Laptop Vendor Forum

     Since 1983, laptops have been a part of computing for a growing number of people. They have been large and small models over the years, but most have given people the freedom to compute away from the office, not tied to a desktop. Of course, now it's 1995 and people involved in computing don't think twice about having a laptop or notebooks computer, most of the time in addition to their desktop.
     For the last 6 years, there have been other companies that have been taking sales away from the standard Toshiba and Compaq notebook line and these companies all need a place to go. Enter the Laptop Vendor forum on CompuServe.
     Managed by Ron Luks, who also manages other portable computing forums on CompuServe (Palmtop A, Palmtop B, Pen Technology) and co-manages the Newton, Newton Vendor, Newton Development and General Magic forums. And also handles the Video Game Publishers forum. So given this experience and claim on the portable computing areas on CompuServe, the Laptop Vendor forum is destined for success.
     In speaking with Ron, he mentions that there are many vendors that have been contacted to place their company support section in this forum. Currently, WinBook, Midwest Micro and Sager have been contacted, with WinBook soon to be online. Currently online are Sharp Electronics, Traveling Software, New Media Corp. and AMS Direct. All of these companies have dedicated a support person to log on often and answer customers questions about their respective products.
     Sharp now has three areas of support on CompuServe. Over in the Palmtop A forum, the Sharp Wizards are supported. This forum would often have messages relating to Sharp laptops and the user would have been referred to another forum for help. Now that has changed. The same thing has happened a few times over on the Palmtop B forum, where Sharp supports the Zaurus K-PDA. Now with a home for laptop and notebook support, Sharp can help their customer base in many ways.
     Since the forum's opening, there have been well over 200 messages, which is a great sign for users who have needed this support.
     Stop by the forum and visit. Over the next few weeks, more vendors will be coming online and will be helping the users and prospective buyers of their products.

Sysops:
Ron Luks - 76703,254
Dawn Gordon - 76703,204
Marty Mankins - 75300,1770

PORTABLE COMPUTING: Laptops/Notebooks

Previous Portables: Budget Laptops and Notebooks

by Marty Mankins

Ever wondered what happened to all of those older 286 and 386 laptops and notebook computers? Well, it seems that there is still a market for them all. As a matter of fact, there are many that are priced well under $1,000, which is pretty affordable for a portable computer.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

As I type now, I am working on an older notebook computer. It so happens that it's been almost a year since I bought this machine. It's an HP OmniBook 300 and I do a good 80% of my writing on it. I also do about 70% of my CompuServe work on it, being a sysop on several forums. And a keep some notes, a separate schedule and several games on this machine.

Being a 386SX/20MHZ machine, it is not a speed demon. In fact, there are a few programs (like NavCIS Pro 1.62, which I use for CompuServe work) that waste a lot of time doing mundane tasks. But, for what I use this machine most of the time for, it works out very nicely. The machine came with 2Mb of RAM, which I upgraded to a total of 4Mb 6 months ago. With 2Mb, I couldn't do a whole lot, but I was able to use the ROM-based built-in programs (Microsoft Word 2.0 and Excel 4.0, along with a PIM program and a few other tidbits) with no trouble at all.

But, as soon as I started adding programs like Sidekick 2.0 and NavCIS Pro, things slowed to an absolute crawl. Adding the extra 2Mb was good, but it would have been better to have added an extra 6Mb, allowing a total of 8Mb of RAM. While it seems that is overkill, for a Windows 3.1 ROM-based environment, it's gives a lot of room for programs and their data. But the battery life (around 4 hours) and the weight (just a hair under 3lbs.), this machine makes life really easy to deal with.

CONSIDERATIONS

The OmniBook 300 has long since been sold from it's closeout state, but there are other places out there that sell a good older machine. One of my favorites that I referred many a poor college student on was the IBM ThinkPad 500. With 4Mb of RAM and your choice of and 85 or 170Mb hard drive, for $800 or $1,000, you got a good 486-based notebook that weighed in at around 4lbs.

With prices of current notebooks around the $2500 average price, getting an older machine could help get by until you can afford a newer model. I've owned at least 3 older laptops that have got me by in times of need until I was able to move up to an newer model. But, you can't get mad at the machine when it wasn't made to run today's hefty software requirements. While the ThinkPad 500 will run Windows 95, you'll need to add more RAM unless time is so available that all the slowness in the world won't matter.

Being able to run Windows 3.1 is not a problem. Now, some of the 286 machines that are out there, may have some problems. So you would be best off with going with at least a 386 model. If you only plan to run WordPerfect 5.1 for DOS and nothing else, then maybe the 286 won't be so bad, if funds are tight. But, with today's needs, Windows is sure to have a winder variety of programs that you may want to run.

WHERE TO FIND THEM

Older laptops are normally new, unless noted in the ads. The best place to look for older machine is in the latest issue of Computer Shopper. There are all sorts of mail order places like Dollar Computer Corp or Tredex, that will have a good stock of older systems. For example, Tredex bought lots of the pen-based DTR-1, from Dauphin when they went through hard times and couldn't sell the machines at $2,000. But at $699, with 6Mb of RAM and an ethernet port, the machines went really fast. In fact, 7 months later, there are no more new DTR-1's anywhere. It seems that the size of the computer (under 4lbs.) and the popularity of the Windows for Pen interface, helped these small notebooks take off.

CONCLUSION

Don't sit around and wish you had a notebook. Check out some of the older models that are out there. For $300 to $1,000, you could be on the

road and writing the next great novel. Or taking notes from a meeting with
enough cash left over for some games and a nice dinner. If you need help,
let me know. Send me an e-mail with your needs, and we'll see what's out
there for you. Just because the industry says it's dead, doesn't mean it's
not useful.
Send e-mail to: 75300.1770@compuserve.com or to: InfoStream@aol.com.

 Atari Jaguar/Computer Section
Dana Jacobson, Editor

From the Atari Editor's Desk   "Saying it like it is!"

     Burp! Excuse me, but after a long day of turkey and all of the
fixings, I'm ready to explode! We at STReport hope that you all had a very
enjoyable Thanksgiving holiday. If you're lucky like I was, you had today
to recuperate (and start working on the leftovers!).
     Even though Atari is out of the computer business these days, we as
Atari users still have quite a bit to be thankful for these days. We still
have a few devoted developers and dealers who are hanging in there and
helping us to continue to enjoy our computers of choice. Sure, it's few and
far between, but it's appreciated. What makes using Atari computers even
more enjoyable is the supportive Atari community of users. There are still
many of us around even if many have supplemented their Atari computers with
PCs and Macs for more needed power in certain areas.
     So, continue to use these computers because they are still valuable
tools and sources for enjoyment. Enjoy the Holiday Season it is the best
time of the year.
                         Until next time...

                     Delphi's Atari Advantage!
                    TOP TEN DOWNLOADS (11/22/95)

   (1) SUPER STARIO LAND DEMO   *(6) ESSCODE64 UUE DECODER/ENCODER
   (2) ZCONTROL 0.2A   *(7) USER GROUP SURVEY RESPONSE 1
   (3) DIAMOND BACK PATCH TO V3.60 *(8) DELPHI ORACLE 1.34
   (4) MAGGIE DISKZINE 8   *(9) ATARI 8-BIT DEALER LIST
   (5) DIAMOND EDGE PATCH TO V 2.04 *(10) ROLLER COASTER EXPERIENCE

                        * = New on list
                        HONORARY TOP 10

The following on-line magazines are always top downloads, frequently out-
performing every other file in the databases.

               STREPORT (Current issue: STREPORT 1146
         ATARI EXPLORER ONLINE (Current issue: AEO: VOLUME 4, ISSUE 7
           Look for the above files in the RECENT ARRIVALS database.

Hello there from England!!

Hi Dana!

I was very pleased to read STReport #1144 a few days ago - particularly
the 'Top Ten Atari Downloads' on Delphi. The reason for that was that I was
very pleased to see that Issue 18 of Maggie, the diskzine for the Atari, was
at No 8.
    I'd better give you a bit of background here. My name is Richard
however you might well have heard of me under my scene name -'Felice' of the
Maggie Team. Together with Chris Holland (editor) and other contributors,
we've produced Maggie since taking over from Issue 11 onwards (back in
1992).
    Maggie has largely been produced for the ST market until Issue 18 -
when we started to produce a Falcon-shell version alongside it. If, by any
chance you have not yet seen it, please feel free to download it either from
one of the sites on the Internet that we contribute to, or from Delphi if it
is on.
    Have you had any feedback regarding Maggie 18 (ST or Falcon)??   As the
authors of Maggie, we would like to see any opinions, whatever, that may
have been made on the Delphi Atari forums (which we have no access to as yet
from the Internet).
    Along with Maggie, as members of the new diskzine union 'Magnetic
Interludes' we also release two other diskzines, DBA (Disk Busters
Association) and ST News (by Rich Karsmakers). New issues of those are due
out around now - DBA #14 (Falcon only, BTW) while ST News should be around
soon.
Hope to hear from you soon,
Richard.
--
Richard Spowart
felice@rushden.demon.co.uk

Editor's note:
    Thanks for the letter, Richard. You'll be happy to learn that "Maggie"
has moved up this week to #4 on Delphi's 'Top 10 Downloads".
    Personally, I haven't had any feedback about the diskzine, but I do
occasionally see a message pertaining to it ´< it is a popular download in
the Atari Advantage area on Delphi. I can tell you that I have enjoyed the
issues that I've downloaded. If we see more feedback, I'll be sure to pass
it along to you folks.

                    REPORT: Comdex Fall 1995

Las Vegas, NV
November 13-17, 1995

by Marty Mankins
    Every year I tell myself, There's no way I am going back to Comdex!,
after each time I get back and realize that there is so much to see and so
many people to get past and the hassle of paying a huge hotel bill and
dealing with the traffic of Las Vegas during the mass amount of visitors.
But, every year around August, I start making plans to go.
    I have to admit that the last two years have not been all that bad.
Being only 5 1/2 hours away (by car) from Las Vegas (I live in Orem, UT -
about 45 miles south of Salt Lake City), I get with two of my co-workers and
pile into a van and make the drive. And for the this year, we stayed out in
Jean, NV at the Gold Strike hotel. It was only $38 a night (thanks to my
reservation in August) and the drive is only about twenty minutes into town
(gives us a chance to listen to the Howard Stern show - currently not
broadcasted in any part of Utah). And being able to drive our own car lets
us collect all sorts of stuff - everything from flyers, press kits, t-shirts
and hats. Boxes and boxes of information will fit into a good-sized van

with no problems for storage space.
THE BIG SHOW

Anyway, let's go over what I saw at the show this year. There were
well over 220,000 attendees and thousands of vendors showing their wares.
It

was amazing to see just how much more they can cram into the Las Vegas
Convention Center, the Las Vegas Hilton and the Sands Convention Hall. Since
the South Hall was torn down earlier this year (to make room for a new
bigger hall to store yet even more vendors and people), they had to use huge
stationary tents for the PowerPC pavilion, the Registration area and the
Microsoft Partners area.

Speaking of the PowerPC, it was nice to see so many people interested
in PowerPC and the number of vendors that are committed to the platform. In
fact, the previously-rumored death of OS/2 for PowerPC was put to rest as
attendees got a chance to actually use the product (although it's still not
shipping, but watch for it in 1996). The massive number of software
products - a lot of which were geared towards networking - were well
received. People ate up as much as they could get on PowerPC. It seems
that the time has come for accepting this entry into not only the Macintosh
platform, but the multi-processing functions of the desktop and the network.

The other big push was portable computing. Everything from laptops to
desktop docking stations to PC Card products, this show was filled with
portable products. The PCMCIA group had a room in the Convention Center
that simply had vendors from different companies supporting their products.
The biggest surprise was IBM, who was marketing their PC Card standard for
hard drive replacement. It was a Flash standard that was designed to
compete with SanDisk (formally known as SunDisk) and their industry wide
standard. The largest card shown was a 40Mb card. IBM says they are
working on 260Mb cards to ship by the end of 1996.

By the way, SanDisk will start shipping their 85Mb and 175 Mb ATA Flash
cards early next year. In fact, I got to see working models, which were
measured in nanoseconds, not milliseconds. The battery life of these cards,
plus the speed of reads and writes are the biggest incentive to switch. The
biggest drawback is price. The 40Mb Flash card is still priced around $1350
on the retail market. SanDisk also promises to show a Type III card that
will replace a 340Mb PC Card hard drive for around $3,000 sometime next
year. Start saving those dimes and quarters now!
LAPTOPS

One of the many items that a lot of vendors are getting into is
laptops. There were vendors that I've never even heard of (ASA) to familiar
companies (Hitachi) that were showing off AMD, Intel and Cyrix-based
notebooks and laptops, most operating at Pentium speeds of over 75MHz. Many
of these unknown companies can beat the Toshibas, Compaqs and HPs on price,
but can't touch their quality. In one case where I was using one brand, it
locked up on me. Now normally, I'd be looking for a sticker that said not
yet FCC´<approved, but when a booth worker came up to me and told me they had
been shipping for 2 months now, I was amazed. What was I doing that locked
it up? I ran WordPad in Windows 95. I didn't even get a chance to type any
text. Oh well.

Toshiba made up for that error by showing off their very
nicely´<engineered Tecra line of notebooks. All with CD-ROM and running
Pentium 120MHz chips. And all models under $6,000. They also showed off
their low-end CD-ROM model with the new 4x drive for under $2,500.
Technology is moving much faster in the portable arena than what we thought
it was supposed to have done. It's a far cry from 10 years ago when I
drooled on a T1100 with 2 floppy drives and 640K of RAM - for the low price
of $2,300.

Sharp had a show of Cyrix-based notebooks all running at above 90MHz.
Sharp is best known for their LCD displays which, in my opinion, are the
industry's best. The clear screens blew me away - and I hadn't even seen

the active matrix models. I was looking at the double scan passive matrix screens and they were so clear, the booth worker had to correct my eyes. Then he showed me the active matrix models. The one, PC-9000, had interchangeable parts that took my eyes away from the gorgeous screen.

This is the next big thing that everyone is going to. You have two bays on some models that you can have a floppy drive, a CD-ROM drive, an extra battery or a large storage device (tape backup, optical) that can be used. Sharp is also looking at the MD Data standard, which I like, and using its size advantage to use as the best external replacement for a floppy drive.

I didn't see too many sub-notebooks, but the one that has continued to impress me is the HP OmniBook 600CT. The new CT model, which has been shipping for about 6 months now, has an awesome active matrix display, a small 3.8 pounds of carrying weight and support for a docking station with SCSI and full port replication. The best thing about the OmniBook 600CT is the instant on feature. Almost every other notebook and laptop on the market has suspend mode that still chews up precious battery life. Not the OmniBook 600CT. When you hit the toggle-based on/off key, the unit actually shuts down and leaves the screen exactly the way you left it. So when you've finished that bumping taxi ride back the office, you can simply tap the on key and your work is exactly the way you left it. Having lost data thanks to other notebook models with suspend mode left on - only to find that half way back to my destination the battery died - it's a relief to know that companies like HP really understand how we work in the field.

ISDN - THE ONLY WAY TO GO!

The entire Hilton, save a few booths, was dedicated to online computing. AOL and CIS, the big boys of the commercial online industry, were there showing off their latest wares. CIS had the best presentation since they were giving away T-shirts (always a crowd pleaser) and had the best reaction to people who didn't know they were on the Internet. (Duhhh!)

But besides these guys, the ISDN people were attempting to convert the masses from their old analog systems. Even Pacific Bell, who only supplies service to Southern California residents, was there trying to show the masses that ISDN is cool and fast. Claiming speeds of at least 128K baud, it really opened my eyes to the benefit of ISDN. Now if US West here in Utah would only know what ISDN is and start offering it to us home-based business people. You'd think they would, given the $80+ per month for service.

Modem companies were there showing off their ISDN products. One company, who will remain nameless, said ISDN was dumb and that no one needs anything faster than a 28.8K modem. I seriously hope this was one opinionated booth worker and not the chief of marketing. Thank goodness for Motorola, who was pushing their BitSurfer quite heavily. This is one amazing modem that is priced at well under $350 and with the mindset of bringing it to small businesses and homes in the near future. I remember paying that much for a 2400 baud modem 12 years ago and thinking, I got the deal of the century! Of course, that modem is now in some computer museum, collecting dust and computer geeks laughing at it.

PDAs GET A BOOST

Apple and Sony were the kings of the PDA at this Comdex. Apple, who had been previously scrambling to admit the leak that MacWorld had sprung for them, had well over 20 Newton third party products on display. And they also had the Newton 2.0 operating system in its big booth, showing and telling of its great new features and functions.

Sony had its new Magic Link PIC-2000 to show off and it was much improved. With a new hard plastic case, two PC Card slots,2Mb of internal RAM and a backlit screen, this is one PDA that has it all. Of course, it's larger than the Newton, but appeals to many people who like to tote their briefcases all over, or to those who don't mind carrying a 1.3 pound PDA in their hands. Great for data collection (I had mine at a press event one

night, collecting names and phone numbers of company contacts), the Magic
Link is now more useful with all sorts of improvements to make it usable by
many.
CONCLUSION
     Comdex Fall 1995 was bigger than the one last year. And I'm sure
Comdex Fall 1996 will be bigger than this year's. Why? So more companies
can showcase their products and be able to handle the massive attack of
people who want to see them. This year was eventful and I had to say I was
very impressed. To those who missed it, you only saved money on hotel, food
and gas by not attending. If you've never been to a trade show before, skip
Comdex. It will only intimidate you and scare you into thinking there are
too many people that use computers. If your business depends on it, there
was some things to see at Comdex that will forever change the face of
computing.

                              Jaguar Section

Dragon's Lair Out! Infomercial!
Fight For Life Alive!
And More...!

From the Editor's Controller - Playin' it like it is!

     I hope that you've all recovered from your Thanksgiving feast; I'm just
beginning to and starting to enjoy the traditional "nibbling" of various
leftovers.
     With the holiday, it's been a short week and a fairly quiet one at
that. We did see Dragon's Lair come out late last week and the first part
of this one, depending on where you happened to be. First impressions of
this "new" game have been positive. Most comments have been that the game
is an excellent port of the arcade game. I'm looking forward to seeing it
myself as I've never played the game, either in the arcades or on the
computer.
     Also in recent weeks, two games have appeared for Atari's Lynx, the
hand´<held game machine. I recently picked up Super Asteroids/Missile
Command. I've always been a big fan of these games, dating back to the
original arcade versions and including a variety of Atari computer versions.
I can never get enough of these two games and I've enjoyed every version
that I've ever played, including these for the Lynx. The games have been
updated somewhat, especially Missile Command with the ability to purchase
all kinds of super weapons. These are terrific translations and if you're a
fan of the games and have a Lynx ´< grab this two´<for´<one package. It's a
classic.
     In the middle of the week, the Jaguar Journal's Jeffrey Norwood hosted
his 4th conference in the Atari/Jaguar forum on CompuServe. As usual, there
were a number of Atari personnel in attendance, but "featured" guest Ted
Hoff turned out to be a last´<minute cancellation. Not surprising with the
scheduling of the conference the night before Thanksgiving. Notwithstanding,
Atari's Ron Beltramo, Don Thomas, and Dan McNamee were in attendance. After
the first hour of a variety of questions, the conference turned to Francois
Bertrand, recently re-hired (contract hire?). We were told that Francois
was brought back to attempt to complete "Fight for Life". We were told
during Hoff's "taped" introductory statement that the game will continue to
be developed; and, if it meets Atari's standards of quality, it will be
released. My impression is that this game is only going to see the light of
day if it turns out to live up to the hype, and then some. Hopefully,
Francois Bertrand will take advantage of this second opportunity and make
this game what the public (and Atari) has come to expect in recent months.
     The conference was slow going for most of the night. Unfortunately,

many of the Atari attendees had to leave before the audience had a good
opportunity to ask a number of questions. We didn't learn too much, but
hearing that Fight for Life was back in progress was heartening for most.
Another item that we'll be hearing more about soon was the announcement that
Atari has completed an infomercial for the Jaguar. The first airing happens
to be tonight, but no details were provided yet other than cable television
will air it. We hope to learn more specifics shortly, and pass them along
to you. Since the conference was held so close to our deadline here, we'll
have the transcript for you in next week's issue.
       As I mentioned earlier, it's been a fairly quiet week for everyone, so
this issue will likely be a short one. In the meantime, sit back, relax,
let out your belt a couple of notches, and enjoy this week's issue. As for
me, I'm heading for the fridge and gather up some more leftovers!
                Until next time....

Jaguar Catalog STR InfoFile -   What's currently available, what's coming
out.

                        Current Available Titles

         CAT #   TITLE   MSRP
DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER

         J9000   Cybermorph $59.99   Atari Corp.
         J9006   Evolution:Dino Dudes $29.99   Atari Corp.
         J9005   Raiden $29.99   FABTEK,
Inc/Atari Corp.
         J9001   Trevor McFur/Crescent Galaxy $29.99   Atari
Corp.
         J9010   Tempest 2000 $59.95
Llamasoft/Atari Corp.
         J9028   Wolfenstein 3D $69.95   id/Atari
Corp.
         JA100   Brutal Sports FootBall $69.95
Telegames
         J9008   Alien vs. Predator $69.99
Rebellion/Atari Corp.
         J9029   Doom $69.99   id/Atari Corp.
         J9036   Dragon: Bruce Lee $39.99   Atari Corp.
         J9003   Club Drive $59.99   Atari Corp.
         J9007   Checkered Flag $39.99   Atari Corp.
         J9012   Kasumi Ninja $69.99   Atari Corp.
         J9042   Zool 2 $59.99   Atari Corp
         J9020   Bubsy $49.99   Atari Corp
         J9026   Iron Soldier $59.99   Atari Corp
         J9060   Val D'Isere Skiing $59.99   Atari Corp.
                  Cannon Fodder $49.99   Virgin/C-West
                  Syndicate $69.99   Ocean
                  Troy Aikman Football $69.99   Williams
                  Theme Park $69.99   Ocean
                  Sensible Soccer   Telegames
                  Double Dragon V $59.99   Williams
         J9009E   Hover Strike $59.99   Atari Corp.
         J0144E   Pinball Fantasies $59.99   C-West
         J9052E   Super Burnout $59.99   Atari Corp.
         J9070   White Men Can't Jump $69.99   Atari Corp.
                  Flashback $59.99   U.S. Gold
         J9078E   VidGrid (CD)   Atari Corp
         J9016E   Blue Lightning (CD) $59.99   Atari Corp

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      J9040        Flip-Out                $49.99    Atari Corp
      J9082        Ultra Vortek              $69.99    Atari Corp
      C3669T   Rayman              $69.99    Ubi Soft
               Power Drive Rally          $69.99    TWI
      J9101        Pitfall                   $59.99    Atari Corp.
      J9086E   Hover Strike CD              $59.99    Atari Corp.
      J9031E   Highlander I (CD)        $59.99    Atari Corp.
      J9061E   Ruiner Pinball           $59.99    Atari Corp.
               Dragon's Lair            $69.99    Readysoft


                      Available Soon
      CAT #          TITLE                      MSRP
DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER


      J9069        Myst (CD)                $59.99        Atari Corp.
               Mutant Penguins          $59.99        Atari Corp.
      J9091        Atari Karts              $59.99        Atari
Corp.
               Battlemorph              $59.99        Atari Corp.
               Breakout 2000            $49.99        Atari Corp.
               Supercross 3D            $59.99        Atari Corp.
               Fever Pitch              TBA       Atari Corp.
               Missile Command 3D       TBA       Atari Corp.
               I-War                    $49.99        Atari Corp.
               Max Force           $59.99        Atari Corp.
      J9089        NBA Jam TE                $69.99        Atari
Corp.
      J9055        Baldies                   $59.99        Atari
Corp.
      J9021        Brett Hull Hockey        $69.99        Atari
Corp.


                    Hardware and Peripherals
      CAT #          TITLE                      MSRP
MANUFACTURER
      J8001        Jaguar (no cart)            $149.99   Atari
Corp.
      J8904        Composite Cable          $19.95
      J8901        Controller/Joypad        $24.95        Atari
Corp.
      J8905        S-Video Cable            $19.95
               CatBox                   $69.95        ICD
      J8800        Jaguar CD-ROM            $149.99   Atari Corp.
      J8908        JagLink Interface        $29.95        Atari
Corp.
      J8910        Team Tap 4-Player Adapter)        $29.95
Atari Corp.
      J8907        Jaguar ProController        $29.95
Atari Corp.
      J8911        Memory Track             $29.95        Atari
Corp.
      J8909        Tempest 2000:
               The Soundtrack           $12.99        Atari Corp.



Industry News STR Game Console NewsFile  -  The Latest Gaming News!


            MAGIC'S STAR RANGERS TO HIT RETAIL SHELVES
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RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK, N.C., Nov. 20 /PRNewswire/ -- Interactive Magic's new PC CD-ROM title Star Rangers will hit retail shelves before the Thanksgiving Holiday. The action-packed space simulation game recently received the "Game of the Month" award from PC Entertainment (formerly known as Electronic Entertainment Magazine).

Star Rangers transports players to the 23rd century where they become members of the intergalactic Border Patrol. Challenged with the task of defending the outer reaches of deep space, players must use the cunning strategy of a great field general, defending their sector of the galaxy from invading alien forces.

"Star Ranger combines all of the excitement and action of a fast-paced space combat game while adding a challenging strategy twist," said Interactive Magic Chairman, "Wild Bill" Stealey. "The really exciting news, however, is that all of the missions in Star Rangers are randomly generated so players can immerse themselves in this space sim and never fly the same mission twice."

Developed in the tradition of Atari's award winning Star Raiders game, Star Rangers is designed to appeal to both new computer owners and experienced gamers alike. The carefully designed practice mode quickly launches players into combat action, while the campaign mode offers players multiple levels of difficulty, each affecting a variety of elements including weapon strength, number and frequency of alien attacks and the probability of damage upon being hit.

Star Rangers, using state-of-the-art textured graphics, produces explosion with incredible detail and provides an enhanced sensation of realism and excitement throughout the game.

For more information about I-Magic contact Dave Murray at (919) 461-0722. Interactive Magic is based in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina and is dedicated to developing and publishing multiplayer and networkable simulation and strategy games for the personal computer.

ONLINE WEEKLY STReport OnLine   The wires are a hummin'!

                    PEOPLE... ARE TALKING

On CompuServe

compiled by
Joe Mirando
73637,2262

Hidi ho friends and neighbors. I don't know about you, but I've stuffed myself to the point of bursting with turkey, potatoes (in deference to J. Danforth Quayle), cranberry sauce, and all the trimmings that we all look forward to all year. As I sat there feeling quite the sloth, I had time to reflect on the reason for the holiday in the first place. So I gave thanks for all that I have. Health and family, friends and possessions. Yes, I've quite a bit to be thankful for. How 'bout you?

There's still the big discussion here on CompuServe about dropping support for terminal programs going on. Although most folks understand the reasons for CompuServe's as yet unannounced decision, most of us wish it weren't so. Well, to everything there is a season.... yeah, yeah, yeah, blah, blah, blah. (can you tell how I feel about it?)

At any rate, CompuServe is still the best place to be if you need to be

online. Let's take a look at why.

From the Atari Computing Forums

On the subject of CompuServe dropping support, I'd just like to say
again what I said last week: This isn't going to happen overnight. It
will happen slowly, as more and more of the forums that make up
CompuServe move to newer, faster host computers, less and less of the
system will be available to terminal program users. With that major
concern out of the way, our Atari Section Editor, Dana Jacobson, asks
about buying stocks. Sysop Bob Retelle tells Dana:

  "You can just check in your phone book for Stock brokers.. many of them
  will accept "walk-in" business."

Dana tells Bob:

  "That was my guess, but aren't there some brokers that are more
  reasonable than others? I mean, aren't there "transaction" charges
  usually involved when you buy (and eventually sell)? Are they all
  pretty standard? What do they usually charge. Being a novice, I'd
  have no idea as to who might be gouging and who is reliable/reasonable.
  Are the stock prices those at the exact time of purchase? Thanks for
  the info."

Jon Sanford tells Dana:

  "You buy stock from a stockbroker! <grin>"

Dana tells Jon:

  "I know you buy from a stockbroker, but that doesn't really tell me
  much, Jon! <g>"

Jon explains his previous short explanation:

  "I feel I have a moral responsibility not to lead the innocent to
  evil."

On the subject of using Spectre GCR, the Macintosh emulator from Dave
Small, to access CompuServe using one of the automated programs for the
Macintosh, Sysop Keith Joins tells Dan McNamee at Atari:

  "I use MacCIM and the Mac Navigator with the GCR all of the time and
  don't have any problems in forums or with the usenet newsgroup reader.
  Speed is sometimes an issue but then that is the case when running any
  of the CIMs on their native platforms also. The current version of
  MacCIM will run in the new Compuserve software enviornment although I
  also fear that someday they will release a System 7 only version also."

Dan tells Sysop Keith:

  "Thanks for the word on MacNav. It's nice to know there are options.
  Strange that you aren't having problems with the usenet news reader in
  MacCIM, though. I have tried everything I can think of and I can't get
  it to work. What system are your running? I'm using 6.0.8, but it
  should be pretty much the same as 6.0.7, and I'm not having problems
  with anything else.

I'm sure that eventually that all of the Mac navigators will move on
to System 7.x and above only. I only hope that they hold out long
enough for either someone to make an ST navigator or for me to get out
of the debt that my ex got me in and able to afford one of the
supported systems."

Keith tells Dan:

  "I am using System 6.0.4 (or 5--can't recall for sure but no higher.)
  What problems are you having with the newsgroup reader? Or do you just
  end up at the crash page in Spectre?"

Dan tells Keith:

  "No, I don't get any crash messages or anything. I select the usenet
  reader (CIM version), and CIM opens the window where the information
  should appear, and then I get the 4 segment spinning wheel and nothing
  else. The wheel just sits there and spins. I let it go for at least
  30 min one evening, and nothing else ever happens."

Chief Sysop Ron Luks tells us:

  "CIS has a couple of goals as I understand it. First, they want and
  need to provide the color and multimedia support that people have come
  to expect from all online services and the World Wide Web, including
  hypertext links.

  Second, CIS needed to totally rewrite their system software to handle
  the huge numbers of people (simultaneous users) without the system
  response bogging down like mayonaise.

  Neither task is trivial and neither can be accomplished by shutting
  down the entire system for a year, re-coding, and then re-opening.

  In order to handle the increased systemload efficiently, CIS is moving
  towards more client-server software instead of the old model of
  mainframe-dumb terminal and the writing client software for the Atari
  is difficult (and in somce cases impossible because the Atari hardware
  isnt robust enough) and very, very expensive for a very, very, very
  small minority of its customer base.

  I tried the use the car/horse analogy but someone came up with a much
  better analogy. If you had an exotic sports car from the 60's that
  required a very exotic high octane gasoline that was formerly available
  but not any longer due to stricter EPA regulations, you couldnt expect
  all service stations to keep a special pump with that exotic gasoline
  mixture."

  To another message along the same lines, I post:

  "Sorry... I still use the same octane as you do... 110 volts.<g>
  Classic cars run fine on standard unleaded with a "lead additive"
  available in most department stores...

  Now, if the federal government announced that you would no longer be
  able to use those additives, only _their_ brand if you wanted to drive
  on the interstate, those folks would be ticked. Most of 'em don't use
  these cars for business, but for recreation. Some of them don't know
  anything else, some are sooo comfortable in that big, familiar interior
  that they don't see the need for another car for any reason other than

the new restrictions put on them. Then there are others who simply
cannot afford to go out and buy the Jag or the Caddy that the "Highway
Patrol" wants them to use.

We're not talking about demanding that they keep that pump and tank,
just that they let someone borrow the recipe for leaded gas. If the
new brew doesn't let us go 110 mph between the stoplights every 100
yards, we'll live with that. They're afraid of having to answer the
phone and tell people "No Ma'am, you have to open the gas cap first,
then you pump the gas"."

Jerry Coppess tells Ron:

"I find DOS about as user friendly as a blind, frozen & left hand
threaded bolt and I have a working PC-Ditto II board in the closet to
prove it. I don't think I would want to wrestle it back into the Mega
even if it were compatable with the Adspeed and TEC board that reside
their now and it was capable of running HMI software.

I have been following the tread so I know about the nonsupport
situation but I don't understand what it is that CIS is going to. Why
do you need 256 colors to use a autonavigator? Is HMI hypertext?

Will their be Atari forum(s) to come to for those still accessing CIS?
I mean is anybody going to bother to redo the stable? I access a few
other forums but Atari support is the main reason I come here. I can
get all the PC support I need locally."

Carl Barron tells Ron:

"Well first I don't plan on shooting the messenger. I have seen this
thread before in UNIXFORUM:) But as I see it the current solution 'buy
a mac/intel for cis' is more like 'get lost sucker we don't want you'.

Also what is the future status of PPP? It might make access at least
possible. I don't have real working PPP software, but it is possible
and not a 'closed game'.

The 'closed game' that CIS loves to play bothers me more than the lack
of an HMI interface at present. This same 'let them eat cake'
philosophy was done with gif89 and the pirates of PA FIASCO. I am not
happy with history repeating as this time, I don't have big numbers on
my side.

Understand that the problems exist, and have to be solved in 'real'
time. I do not like the current solution.

Cis and its modem changes is a real pain. The so called 14.4 line
retrains and terminates so shortly after logon I can't do a thing. The
so called 2400 line is 14.4 [sometimes] and does not. Letters to
feedback, get the 'no problem' solution, but the problem continues. I
understand CIS is growing, but customer relations is certainly becoming
a 'dead platform' around CIS and this HMI stuff sure proves that to be
the case."

Sysop Ron Luks, who is a good guy and someone I have an abundance of
respect for, tells Carl:

"Maybe I dont understand what you are asking, because CIS now supports
PPP access. I log on thru a PPP connection all the time. With the New

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WinCIM 2.0, I can dial one number and simultaneously access the WWW
and the CIS forums."
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Carl tells Ron:

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"I am asking quite simply if PPP is going away??  Is the possibility of
teleneting the 'normal' cis areas going away?  It is currently possible
and there is a free unix terminal programm/package to do so, in source
form.  This 16meg TT can support a unix 'clone' for a lot less than a
new cpu and software <smile>."
```

Sysop Jim Ness tells Carl:

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"No, PPP as a protocol is not going away.  The problem is that even
though you can get into CIS that way, you still will need to access via
a non-ASCII method.
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In other words, traditional PPP/Telnet won't work.  PPP/WWW will (and
does)."
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Carl posts:

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"Very interesting I might just try it.  This translates to all I need
is a web browser on this end. Correct?  I do have at least one lynx
right now, chimera, when the xwindose can reside in tt ram, and some
others. There is talk of a commerical web browser on another network.
Would be reason enough to purchase just to stay here.  All is not lost
after all, if I read this correctly.  Keep up the good work."
```

Sysop Jim tells Carl:

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"Right.  Your PPP destination would be GATEWAY.COMPUSERVE.COM to log
in.
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As of today, you need a web browser to get to that gateway (for right
now, TELNET COMPUSERVE.COM via ASCII still works too), and then an HMI
program to log in.  Maybe someday even the CIS side will use web
graphics and protocols instead of their own proprietary stuff."
```

Well folks, that's about it for this week. If you subscribe to CompuServe
(but not their policies), make sure that you send them email to let them
know what you think. Just type GO FEEDBACK and pick the category that seems
to fit best. Let your voice be heard. In the words of Mahatma Gandhi,
"Whatever you do will be insignificant, but it is
very important that you do it."

Tune in again next week, same time, same station, and be ready to listen to
what they are saying when...

                         PEOPLE ARE TALKING

Genie being sold Confirmed! STR Infofile

November, 1995

Dear GEnie Subscriber,

GE Information Services, the owner of GEnie Online Services, announced

yesterday that the company is working with the investment firm of Allen & Company to identify potential buyers for GEnie. The decision to seek a buyer for GEnie was a difficult one for GE Information Services. We feel tremendous loyalty to our customers, and we considered very carefully the options available to us. Finally, our business decision was based on a desire to focus on GE Information Services' main mission - to provide business productivity solutions to businesses around the world. We lead this market, and we derive more than 95% of our revenues from this market. In 1995, GE Information Services has invested in GEnie with a new graphical user interface, new multi-player game offerings, faster access speeds, and simplified pricing. We believe that GEnie presents a good fit within a company whose main focus is in the consumer market.

GEnie subscribers are the best in the world, and we are keeping you front and center as we seek a new owner for GEnie. We assure you that you will receive top quality service and support throughout this process. We will make every effort to make this transition transparent to you. In the long run, we hope that this transaction will make GEnie a better and even more exciting service for you, our customer.

Please check GEnie's logon announcements periodically. Updates will be provided whenever new information can be released. (Type "GENIE" at any menu prompt and select Item #2 from the menu which is presented to access the announcements if you're already online, or take a moment to review them each time you logon.)

Sincerely,

Horace Martin
Acting President
GEnie Online Services

EDITORIAL QUICKIES

"I would rather be attacked than unnoticed.
For the worst thing you can do to an author
is to be silent as to his works..."

..A wise and prudent observer

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